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PATSY WALKER

ER-I DON'T THINK I CARE TO SEE THIS MOVIE, BUZZ! IN FACT, I THINK I'D RATHER GO HOME AND-ER-UH-WASH MY HAIR!
NOW PLAYING
JUNGLE TRAILS
"GLAMOUR GIRL!"
A.J. 3509

PATSY! WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU DOING?
HUH? OH, BUZZ! I WAS JUST TRYING TO SEE HOW I'D LOOK WITH MY HAIR UP! I'VE BEEN THINKING OF GOING TO THE BEAUTY SHOP AND HAVING IT DONE!

THAT'S A SILLY WASTE OF MONEY! THE NEW HAIR STYLES ARE *SILLY, REPULSIVE AND IMPRACTICAL!*

BUT I'M GETTING *TIRED* OF LOOKING THE SAME, DAY IN AND DAY OUT! DON'T YOU FEEL THAT WAY SOMETIMES?

OF COURSE NOT! YOU'RE JUST *RIGHT* THE WAY YOU ARE!

YOU'RE *SWEET* TO SAY THAT!

OH, CLERK!

ER— CLERK!

BUZZ! I BELIEVE YOU HAVE A CUSTOMER!

HUH? OH, LET HIM *WAIT!* WE'RE TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING *IMPORTANT!*

OH, ALL RIGHT! I'M COMING!

OH, CLERK!

WHAT'LL IT...

...BE-E-E-E-E-E

?

ZIP!

PHOOEY!

HMPH! OH, BUZZ, MAY I *SEE* YOU FOR A MOMENT?

I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A MOMENT, PATSY!
WATER, STRAW, NAPKIN! ANYTHING ELSE, MISS?
NO! THAT'S ALL!
IT'S SILLY FOR ME TO ACT JEALOUS! AFTER ALL, SHE'S NOTHING MORE TO BUZZ THAN A MERE CUSTOMER! HE HAS TO BE POLITE!
OKAY, PATSY! WHAT IS IT?
WHAT ABOUT THAT CHOCOLATE SUNDAE YOU WERE MAKING FOR ME?
COMIN' RIGHT UP, PATSY!
OF COURSE I WAS SILLY TO THINK HE'D CARE FOR THAT "WOULD-BE GLAMORPUSS!" HE'S COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN HER NOW!
HERE'S YOUR SUNDAE, PATSY!
BUZZ! LOOK OUT!
SPLAT!
NOW LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE! IF YOU HADN'T BEEN SO BUSY OGLING THAT GIRL, THIS WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED! BUZZ BAXTER, I THINK YOU'RE A TWO-TIMING, FICKLE...
GOSH, PATSY! I DIDN'T MEAN TO— GOLLY, I'M SORRY!
IT JUST PROVES THAT YOU DON'T CARE FOR ME ANY MORE! YOU DIDN'T MEAN A WORD YOU SAID BEFORE! YOU ARE TIRED OF THE WAY I LOOK!
OH, PATSY! THAT'S NOT TRUE! I DO MEAN IT WHEN I SAY I LIKE YOU JUST THE WAY YOU ARE!
3

GOOD DAY, MR. BAXTER! I'LL LEAVE YOU TO MISS "FANCY HAIRDO!"

BUT-BUT-BUT-BUT-B-B-

WHO DOES HE THINK HE'S KIDDING? I SAW THE WAY HE PRACTICALLY THREW HIMSELF AT HER! HE ACTUALLY HAD THE NERVE TO DENY IT!

HMMMM... I THINK I'LL ARRANGE A LITTLE TEST FOR MR. BAXTER! THIS'LL GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO PROVE WHAT HE SAID!

THE NEW LOOK COIFFURE

ONE HOUR LATER...

NOW I'VE GOT TO CHANGE MY CLOTHES AND MAKE MY DISGUISE COMPLETE!

JUST A MOMENT, YOUNG LADY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? YOU MUST BE IN THE WRONG HOUSE!

HUH?

OH, BROTHER, THIS IS SIMPLY PRECIOUS! IF MY OWN MOTHER CAN'T RECOGNIZE ME, THEN BUZZ DOESN'T HAVE A CHANCE!

I'M AFRAID I DON'T UNDERSTAND, YOUNG WOMAN! I'LL HAVE TO ASK YOU TO LEAVE!
MOTHER, IT'S ME, PATSY! I'VE HAD MY HAIR DONE UP! I MUST HURRY, MOTHER, I'VE GOT TO CHANGE MY CLOTHES AND MEET BUZZ!
MEANWHILE...
PUT GOBS OF WHIPPED CREAM ON, BUZZIE DEAR!
OKAY, HEDY!
OH, CLERK!
HEY!
ZIP!
WATER, STRAW, NAPKIN! ANYTHING ELSE, BEAUTIFUL?
BEAUTIFUL? DO YOU REALLY THINK I AM?
I CERTAINLY DO, MISS... MISS...
5

SWAT!

GULP!

A SHORT WHILE LATER, AFTER PATSY RETURNS TO HER ROOM...

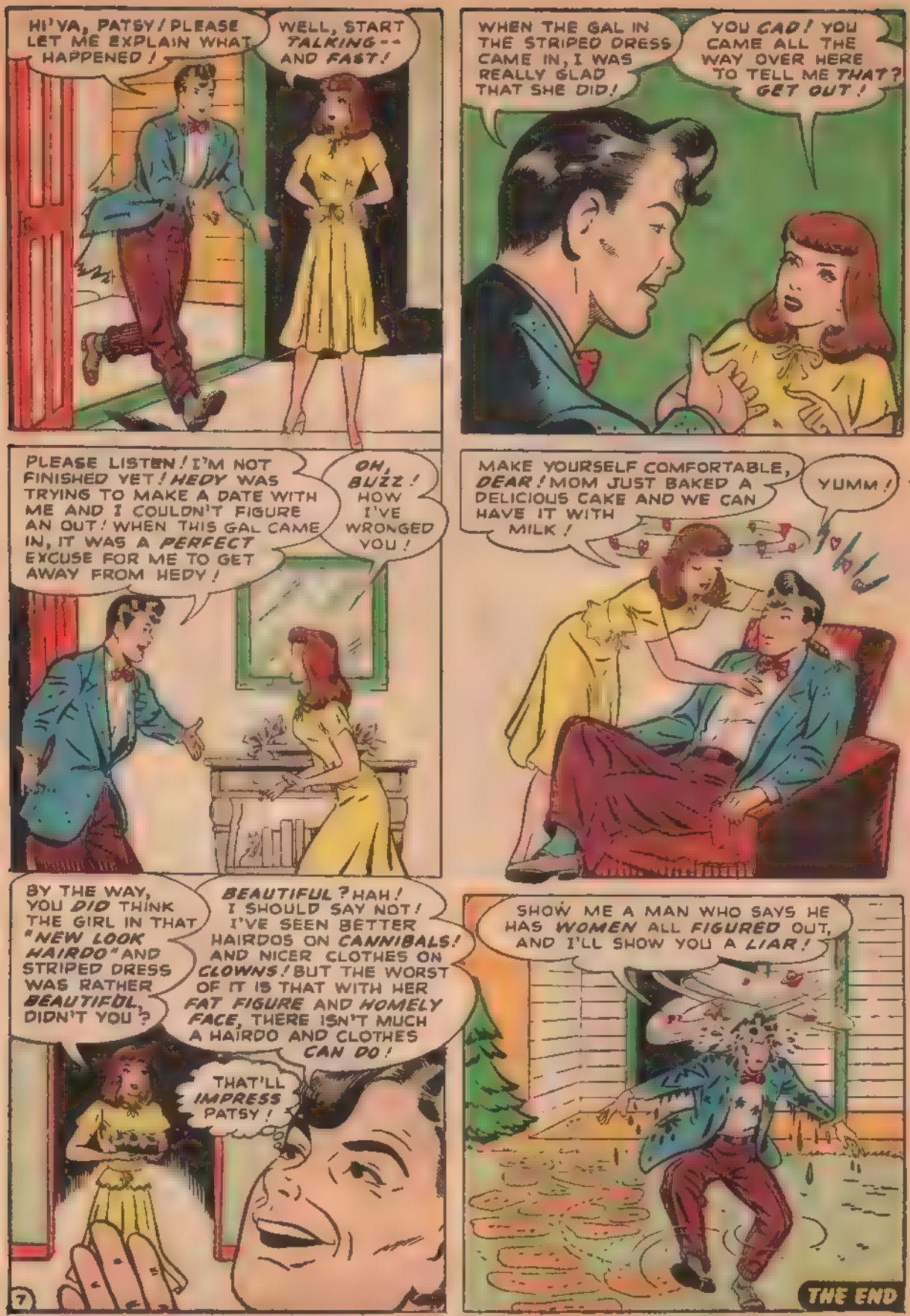
HELLO, BUZZ? I HAVE JUST RECEIVED A REPORT REGARDING THE *ATTENTIONS* YOU PAID TO A YOUNG LADY WITH UPSWEPT HAIR AND A STRIPED DRESS! YOU WERE SEEN *FAWNING* ALL OVER HER, YOU-- YOU *BLUEBEARD!*

BUT, *PATSY*, *LISTEN!* LOOK, I'LL COME OVER AND *EXPLAIN* EVERYTHING!

I'D BETTER LET MY HAIR DOWN AGAIN, OR BUZZ *WILL KNOW EVERYTHING!*

BRI-I-ING!

THAT MUST BE BUZZ *NOW!*


HI'YA, PATSY! PLEASE LET ME EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED!
WELL, START TALKING -- AND FAST!
WHEN THE GAL IN THE STRIPED DRESS CAME IN, I WAS REALLY GLAD THAT SHE DID!
YOU CAD! YOU CAME ALL THE WAY OVER HERE TO TELL ME THAT? GET OUT!
PLEASE LISTEN! I'M NOT FINISHED YET! HEDY WAS TRYING TO MAKE A DATE WITH ME AND I COULDN'T FIGURE AN OUT! WHEN THIS GAL CAME IN, IT WAS A PERFECT EXCUSE FOR ME TO GET AWAY FROM HEDY!
OH, BUZZ! HOW I'VE WRONGED YOU!
MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE, DEAR! MOM JUST BAKED A DELICIOUS CAKE AND WE CAN HAVE IT WITH MILK!
YUMM!
BY THE WAY, YOU DID THINK THE GIRL IN THAT "NEW LOOK HAIRDO" AND STRIPED DRESS WAS RATHER BEAUTIFUL, DIDN'T YOU?
BEAUTIFUL? HAH! I SHOULD SAY NOT! I'VE SEEN BETTER HAIRDOS ON CANNIBALS! AND NICER CLOTHES ON CLOWNS! BUT THE WORST OF IT IS THAT WITH HER FAT FIGURE AND HOMELY FACE, THERE ISN'T MUCH A HAIRDO AND CLOTHES CAN DO!
THAT'LL IMPRESS PATSY!
SHOW ME A MAN WHO SAYS HE HAS WOMEN ALL FIGURED OUT, AND I'LL SHOW YOU A LIAR!
THE END
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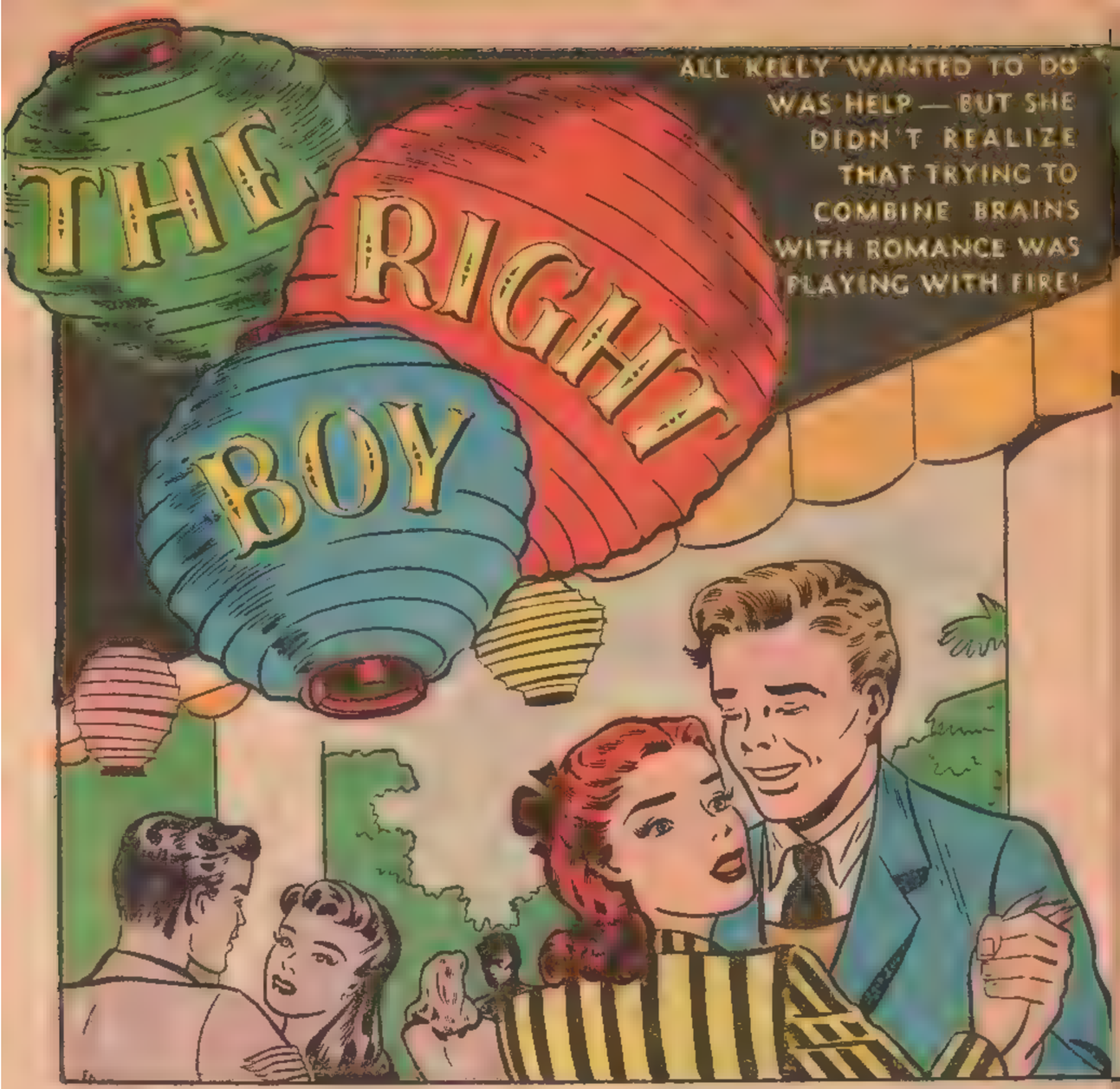
The 4 TOP-TEEN-AGE MAGAZINES!


THE RIGHT BOY
ALL KELLY WANTED TO DO WAS HELP — BUT SHE DIDN'T REALIZE THAT TRYING TO COMBINE BRAINS WITH ROMANCE WAS PLAYING WITH FIRE!

By JANE FLOWER PHILPY
"The moon halo theory is purely superstition," she said primly. "Actually, it is caused by moisture in the air."

I AM not quite sure, but I think I have been bamboozled. It all started a few weeks ago when I told Kent Dawson—he's our next door neighbor and my most frequent boy friend—that something absolutely had to be done about my cousin, Althea Blake.

You see, she's blonde and cute, but the trouble is that she has an overdose of brain. And the boys around Holly Hill prefer personality gals to the ones with too much I.Q. and too little heart. I can't say I blame them because who wants to spend an evening with a girl who's so beautiful she takes your breath away, but can't even talk about the weather without bringing up things like isotherms and isobars?

Well, anyway I was sitting by our back yard lily pool putting Rare Orchid polish on my nails when Kent came over and said, "Hi, Kelly. Fixing yourself all pretty to go to the dance with me tonight?"

Now, of course, that's what I was doing, but a girl doesn't like a boy to sound overconfident so I said, "No."

"No?"

"No." I pouted a little this time.

"Too bad."

That's what I like about Kent. Girls are supposed to keep boys guessing. But Kent doesn't know that. "I decided not to go unless you get Althea a date, too," I added hastily.

"Kelly Blake, you know that's impossible!" Kent groaned. "There's not a boy in this town who'll go out with Althea."

With elaborate care I enameled my thumb nail. "What about Nick Adams? He hasn't lived here long, and he doesn't know Althea."

Kent groaned again. "Oh, all right. I'll get Althea the date. But talk to her, please, and ask her to act a *little* dumb. That shouldn't be too hard, living with you."

He was gone before I had a chance to get mad. . . . That night while we were dressing I said, "Althea, would you do me a favor?"

"Of course," Althea said primly. "After all, I am the recipient of your hospitality. I would be glad to do you any favor—within reason."

Maybe I'd better explain that Althea's parents are famous lecturers and they travel a lot. When they're gone Althea stays at our house.

"All I want you to do," I said, "is forget you have a brain . . . just for tonight. We'll be seniors this fall, and some day you'll realize you're leading a lopsided life—all test tubes and geometry theories and no men."

"Theorems."

"O. K. But will you?"

Althea fluffed out her blonde hair and said, "I have yet to meet any man smooth enough to make me use deception to hold him."

"It isn't exactly deception," I insisted. "It's—well, it's just that most men like to think they're smarter than girls."

Althea grinned. "So that's it. I've always wondered why you wow all the boys."

"Cast no aspersions," I said sternly.

"O. K.," Althea said, and I couldn't help but see an almost desperate look in her big blue eyes. "I'll try, Kent, honestly I will."

. . . If ever there was a perfect setting for budding romance, it was at Maddon Heights outdoor dance pavilion. Bobbing up above our heads were dozens of multicolored paper lanterns that should have added a special aura of enchantment to everything. But from the very beginning it was quite evident that Nick and Althea just weren't meant for each other. They sat there sipping sodas and saying nothing.

Just as the orchestra started playing one of those soft dreamy tunes I gave Kent the high sign. And like a gallant gentleman he said, "Want to dance, Kelly?"

"Why, I'd just love to," I replied, trying to act surprised. Then I turned to Althea and Nick. "Better

not let this music go to waste."

Nick, bless him, asked Althea to dance, and the four of us moved out onto the dance floor.

When we were out of hearing, I groaned. "Golly, Kent, I'd give anything if Althea and Nick would hit it off right. I hate seeing her spend all her time congregating French verbs."

"Conjugating."

"O. K., conjugating. But that's beside the point. I . . ."

"Look, Kelly kitten, why don't you leave Althea alone?" Kent said softly. "If she's happy with her French verbs that's all that's necessary, isn't it?"

"But she isn't really happy," I wailed. "And she says she hasn't met anyone who's smooth enough for her to use deception to hold him."

Kent frowned. "Maybe she just hasn't met the right man." He looked down at me and grinned in a funny little way that made me wonder if he thought he was the right man for me. But then all of a sudden I didn't have time to wonder any more because Althea and Nick were dancing very close to us, and I couldn't help but hear what they were saying.

Nick said, "Look, Althea, there's a circle around the moon. Dig out your overshoes and raincoat. We're in for a shower tomorrow."

Althea looked up. The expression on her face was so innocent that it is no wonder her words came as somewhat of a shock. "The moon halo theory is purely superstition," she said primly. "Actually it is caused by moisture in the air. This, of course, is likely to result in rain, but then again . . ."

Kent must have seen the disgusted gleam in my eye, for he whirled me away from there, but fast.

Then he looked down at me and grinned. "For Althea, Kelly kitten, Nick is not the right man."

. . . For several days after that I felt very bad. Here we were on the threshold of our senior year and Althea was still dateless. And in Holly Hill when a senior girl is dateless her life is but nothing.

Of course, Althea pretended not to care. But anyone with even half a brain could tell that was just a pose . . . especially me. Althea sleeps in the same room with me, you see, and several times I had awakened in the middle of the night thinking an earthquake was rocking the house, but it was only Althea sobbing her heart out.

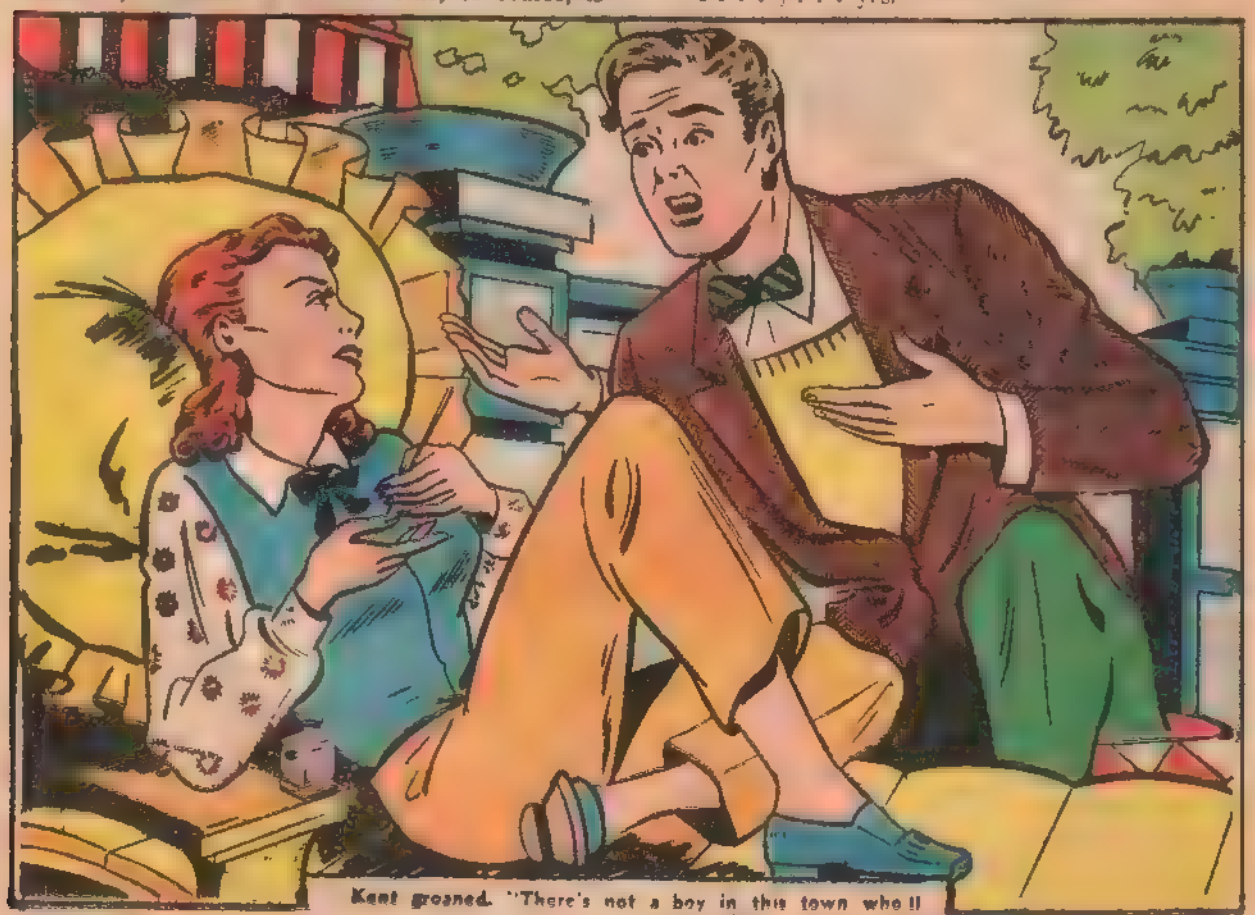
After about the third of those simulated earthquakes I was on the verge of sacrificing Kent for my cousin's sake. But then fate came to my rescue.

I was taking a sun bath in our back yard one afternoon when suddenly a very deep voice said, "Pardon me, but is this the Blake residence?"

I opened my eyes slowly, and for a moment or two I thought the sun had been too much for me. Well, honestly, the boy standing above me was all my favorite movie heroes rolled up in one—a teenage version, of course. I sat up and tried to say in a matter-of-fact tone, "Y. . . y. . . yes, this is the Blake residence."

"I'm Lyle Weston. Are you Miss Blake?"

"Y. . . y. . . yes."



Kent groaned. "There's not a boy in this town who'll go out with Althea."

"I'm new here," Lyle said, "and I have to take a make-up French quiz before I enroll, and Miss Waldron, the French teacher, said you might agree to coach me."

"Oh." I stood up. "You want Althea. She's my cousin. I'm Kelly Blake." I held out my hand.

Lyle shook it and said, "I'm very glad to meet you, Kelly. Is your cousin as attractive as you?"

"Oh, Althea's a raving beauty," I said, and it was at that precise moment that I got my idea. It was such a wonderfully stupendous idea that for a moment or two it left me speechless. But then in a very confidential tone I said, "As a matter of fact, Althea is so beautiful that when she helps boys with lessons and things she puts on an intellectual pose. She has to so they'll keep their minds on their work."

"Oh, really?" he said, and it didn't take a master mind to see that he was getting interested.

"Actually," I went on, "Althea isn't as smart as she pretends. It's just that she has a very photogenic brain."

For several seconds Lyle looked puzzled. But then he said, "You wouldn't, by any chance, mean photographic?"

"Maybe I would. But anyway you keep right on asking Althea for dates and before you know it you'll find out what a wonderful person she is."

Lyle's eyes got very wide, and his mouth flew open.

"By the way," I added, "are you going to be busy tonight?"

"Well, I . . ."

"Fine. You and Althea can go to the movies with Kent and me. Now if you'll wait just one minute I'll see what I can do about the French lessons."

As soon as I got Lyle and Althea properly introduced I hurried over to tell Kent. He was in the front yard running the lawn mower about fifty miles an hour, and I had to yell three times before he stopped.

"Golly, Kent," I cried, "I've just met the smoothest male you've ever seen!"

Kent looked at me, and his eyes, which are usually sort of brownish yellow, turned positively bright green. "You didn't have to run all the way over here to tell me that," he said in a very clipped tone. "I have eyes and I can see." He started pushing the lawn mower again and almost ran over me before I added up green eyes and clipped tones and got the right answer.

"Oh, Kent, you goon," I yelled, "I mean for Althea!"

He stopped abruptly and said, "Oh."

"Were you jealous, Kent?"

"Of course not!"

"Well, that's fine," I said, "because Lyle's going to be around our house an awful lot. You see, Althea's going to give him French lessons, and we're going to do some double-dating."

. . . It was about four days and three double dates later when I became aware that Kent didn't think much of my plan.

"But don't you see," I insisted, "if I can get Lyle and Althea to go out often enough together Althea will eventually loosen up and be her sweet lovable self? Then Lyle will fall for her, and everything will be rosy."

Kent grumbled. "If you ask me, he's already fallen for you."

"Oh, don't be stupid," I said. "Lyle is a product of fate. He came along just as I was about to sacrifice you to Althea."

"You what?" Kent yelled.

"If Lyle hadn't appeared at the precise moment he did," I said calmly, "I was going to give you up so you could save Althea from a nothingless senior year."

"Well, I'll be . . . Kelly, you ought to have your head examined!"

"It wouldn't do any good."

"You're telling me!" And with that he stalked across our back yard, across his back yard and into the house—and slammed the door.

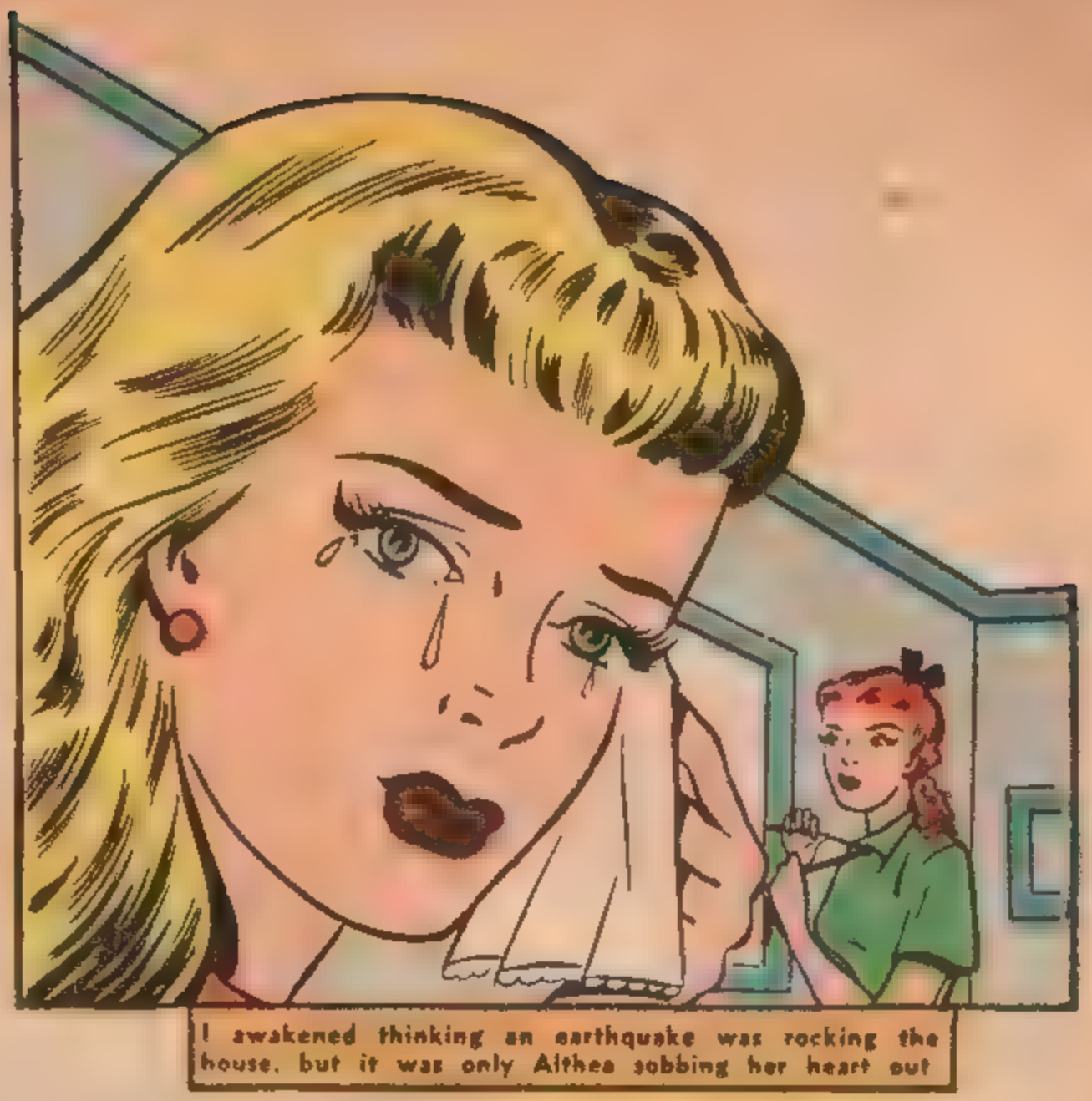
. . . I didn't see Kent again for three long, horrible, miserable days. And to make matters worse Lyle and Althea sat around all the time doing nothing but congregating those horrible French verbs . . . all right, conjugating. But even in a foreign language I could tell that romance had not begun to bud.

And then the awful, cataclysmic thing happened.

Kent came to the front door one morning, rang the bell, and when I opened it he said, "I'd like to see Althea."

"Althea?"

"Your cousin, Althea Blake. I'd



I awakened thinking an earthquake was rocking the house, but it was only Althea sobbing her heart out

like to ask her to accompany me to the dance this evening."

I was practically speechless, but not quite. "But you have a date with me tonight!"

"Consider it broken."

"But . . ."

"If you'd kindly remove yourself from the doorway, I'd like to come in and speak to Althea."

With much tossing of my red curls I went out to the back porch where Lyle and Althea were studying. When Althea had left I said, "You may as well face it, Lyle. You've lost out with my cousin. So you can take me to the dance tonight."

Lyle said, "Well, uh . . ."

"That's fine. I'll be ready at nine."

. . . If ever there was a perfect setting for budding romance, it was *not* at the Maddon Heights dance pavilion that night. The music was still soft, and the multicolored lanterns still bobbed above our heads. But Kent was at one table with Althea, and I was at another with Lyle.

Now don't misunderstand me. Lyle is an awfully nice guy, but he's just not my type. We were sitting there like a couple of sphinxes when Althea came bubbling over to our table. Kent was following her, and they looked so happy that I felt like joining the Foreign Legion.

"We've been having the most divine time," Althea said. "Kelly, why didn't you tell me Kent was such a smooth dancer?"

If I hadn't been feeling so dismal, I would have reminded Althea of what she'd said about not using deception to hold a man because Kent is anything but a smooth dancer. He steps on toes.

"Kelly, I wonder if I could steal Lyle from you for just a minute?" Althea asked.

"Oh, go right ahead," I said—acidly, I hoped.

"You're sweet," Althea gushed. "Kent, dance with Kelly so she won't be lonesome."

There seemed to be no alternative so we danced. And I seethed.

"That cousin of yours really has a brain," Kent said.

I seethed some more—in silence.

"Knows how to use it, too."

More silence.

"I think at last she's found the right man."

That was too much. "Kent Dawson, I think you're mean!" I cried. "The Sahara desert is going to have to see high tide before I try to help anyone with her love life again!"

Kent looked down at me, and there was the strangest twinkle in his eyes. "Can I depend on that, Kelly kitten?"

"You most certainly can!" I said, and it was then that I noticed Lyle and Althea dancing near us.

I couldn't help but hear Lyle's deep masculine voice as he said, "Look, Althea, there's a halo around the moon. That means we'll have rain tomorrow."

And Althea said, "Really? What a quaint superstition!" Her eyes were like stars as she looked up at Lyle. "Do you suppose there could possibly be any truth to it?"

I guess my mouth must have flown open because when I looked up Kent was laughing at me.

"What did I tell you?" he grinned. "All it takes is the right man."

"But I thought . . . Oh, Kent, you're impossible! You made Althea use deception to get Lyle!"

"Isn't that what you wanted?"

"Yes, but . . ."

"And you promised not to interfere in anyone else's love life. Remember?"

"Yes, but . . ."

"A promise is a promise."

"But you tricked me," I cried. "You made me think that you and Althea . . . For three days I've been miserable, Kent!"

He didn't say a word, just held me a little closer, and we went into a graceful dip that made my white organdy rustle and swish about my ankles.

That's what I like about Kent. He doesn't know it's the girl who's supposed to keep the boy guessing.

THE END

"But you have a date with me tonight!"

PATSY WALKER

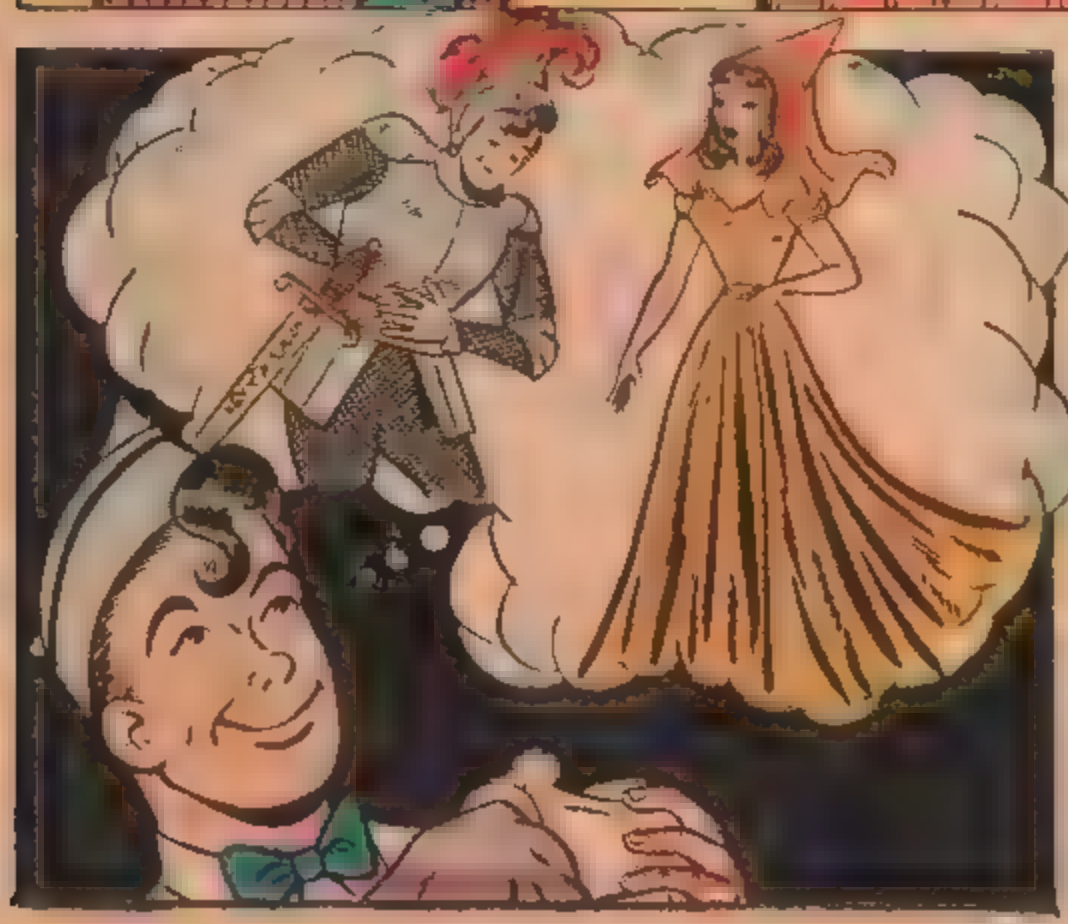
WHAT WOULD *YOU* DO, FRIEND, IF *YOU* MET THE GUY WHO WAS TRYING TO STEAL YOUR GAL? THERE'S A GUY WHOS TRYING TO DO THAT TO *ME* AND I FEEL LIKE *BREAKING HIS NECK!*

YOU'D BE *PERFECTLY JUSTIFIED,* PAL! I'VE GOT A CUTE LITTLE GAL FRIEND NOW, AND IF I EVER CATCH *HER* WITH ANOTHER GUY, I'LL *KILL* HIM!

LOOK, NANCY! MY WORRIES ARE *OVER!* I THOUGHT I'D HAVE TROUBLE WHEN BUZZ AND THAT NEW BOY I'VE BEEN GOING OUT WITH MET! BUT LOOK! THERE THEY ARE -- AND APPARENTLY THEY'RE *GOOD FRIENDS!*

"PATSY'S POWERFUL PUNCH!"

A.J. 3343



WELL, HERE COMES MY FAIR LADY NOW! AS USUAL, SHE'S FIGHTING WITH HEDY! AND AS USUAL, THE FIGHT IS OVER *ME!*

AND I TELL YOU HE'S GOING OUT WITH ME TONIGHT!
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK! HE'S GOING OUT WITH ME TONIGHT!
I CERTAINLY DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU GET YOUR NERVE, PATSY! I'M SURE HE DOESN'T CARE FOR YOU IN THE LEAST!
OH, YOU THINK YOU KNOW SO MUCH! WHEN HE LOOKS AT ME, I CAN SEE HE'S STARRY-EYED!
GIRLS! GIRLS! DON'T YOU THINK I OUGHT TO HAVE SOME SAY AS TO WHO GOES OUT WITH ME TONIGHT?
GO OUT WITH YOU?
OH, HEDY WILL BE GLAD TO GO OUT WITH YOU, BUZZ! WON'T YOU, HEDY DEAR?
OH, NO! YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SHOULD GO OUT WITH BUZZ, PATSY DEAR!
BUZZ IS JUST YOUR TYPE! YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED HIM! NOW'S YOUR CHANCE! TAKE HIM! HE'S ALL YOURS!
DON'T TRY TO PAWN HIM OFF ON ME! YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD HIM! NOW YOU CAN KEEP HIM!
2

N NANCY! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

COME HERE, BUZZ! LET ME STRAIGHTEN YOU OUT! THEY'RE FIGHTING OVER A FELLOW THEY JUST MET AND...

WHAT? YOU MEAN THEY'RE NOT FIGHTING OVER *ME?*

I KNOW THIS IS QUITE A SHOCK TO YOU, BUT IN A WORD, THAT'S IT -- *EXACTLY!*

WELL, I MET HIM FIRST!

YOU DID NOT! I DID! BUT THERE'S ONE WAY TO SETTLE THIS! LET'S GO AND SEE WHOM *HE* WANTS TO TAKE OUT TONIGHT!

WHOEVER HE IS, HE CAN'T *DO* THIS TO ME! I'LL *KILL* HIM! I'LL... I'LL...

CONTROL YOURSELF, BUZZ! DON'T DO ANYTHING RASH! THERE'S SOMETHING I MUST TELL YOU FIRST! HE'S A

HELLO! I'M BACK!

WHAT HAPPENED, HEDY? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU JUST SWALLOWED A *ROCK!*

AW! HE MUST BE *BLIND!* HE PICKED *PATSY!*

PATSY! *NO!* I'LL BREAK EVERY BONE IN HIS HEAD! HE CAN'T STEAL MY GIRL AND GET AWAY WITH IT!

B--BUT, BUZZ! PLEASE! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!
I KNOW ONE THING! NO ONE IS GOING TO TAKE MY GAL FROM ME WITHOUT A FIGHT! COME ON, SHOW ME WHERE HE S!
HE'S IN THAT GYM AND HIS NAME IS DUFFY! BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO GO IN YOURSELF! I CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT OF BLOOD!
I PROMISE NOT TO HURT HIM TOO MUCH! I'LL JUST CRIPPLE HIM A LITTLE!
GYMNAS
DUFFY, EH? AH, THERE HE IS! AND JUST LOOK AT 'IM! HE'S A LITTLE RUNT! I CAN'T IMAGINE PATSY GOING FOR HIM! AND I CAN'T UNDERSTAND NANCY'S CONCERN FOR ME!
SO YOU'RE THE LITTLE PUNK WHO THINKS HE'S GOING TO STEAL MY WOMAN, EH? WHEN I'M THROUGH WITH YOU, THEY'LL PICK YOU UP WITH A BLOTTER!
HEY! WHAT'S EATIN YO KID?
STOP SHAKIN', SQUIRT! WHERE'S YOUR PRIDE? YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE GREAT DUFFY, THE LADY KILLER! BUT NOW WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WHEN YOU FACE A MAN, DUFFY OL' PAL?
HEY, JOE! WHAT'S WRONG?
DUFFY! QUICK! GET THIS CRAZY KID AWAY FROM ME!
DUFFY? YIPE!

WELL, ER--N CE TO HAVE MET YOU. ER-- D--DUFFY! *S-S-S'LONG* NOW!

OH, NO YOU DON'T! I DON'T LIKE PUNK KIDS WHO COME IN HERE AND TRY TO ANNOY ME!

SMACK!

BUZZ!

SPLAT!

HA! HA! HA! HI'YA, BABE! HOW'D YOU LIKE THE WAY I FLATTENED THAT GUY OUT? HE CAME IN CLAIMIN' YOU'RE HIS GOIL! IMAGINE THE NOIVE O' TH' GUY!

OH, BUZZ! YOU *POOR, DEAR, BRAVE BOY!* YOU ACTUALLY THOUGHT ENOUGH OF ME TO COME IN AND FEARLESSLY CHALLENGE THIS PROFESSIONAL GORILLA TO A FIGHT!

WHA--? WHERE AM ?

AND AS FOR *YOU*, YOU *BIG BULLY!* TAKE *THAT!*

OWOOOO!

POW!

CLICK!

THAT EVENING.

CAN YOU *EVER* FORGIVE ME FOR BEING SO FICKLE, BUZZ?

OF COURSE, BABY! DON'T I *ALWAYS?* AND LOOK AT *THIS!*

DAILY PRESS

LOCAL BELLE RINGS BELL

K.O.'s PUG!

POW!

THE END

SUE HATED TO GIVE UP, BUT TED SEEMED TO RESENT EVERYTHING SHE DID. AND SHE JUST DIDN'T KNOW THE ANSWERS!

Sue hesitated. This seemed to be the critical moment.

LUCKY DATE

By JUSTIN DEWEY TRIEM

IT was Sue's turn to serve, but instead of doing so she stood still the springy balls in one hand, the taped racket handle in the other. Her eyes swerved away from the young fellow across the net. An off-shore wind brought the sharp tang of salt water, the wash of waves. The gay laughter of a group of young people drifted tantalizingly up from the surf. They're having a good time, Sue thought, they're making the most of these last few days before school.

Then again she faced the court. Ted was watching her, his face grim, and unhappy. Sue knew he would flinch when she served.

Sue drove the first ball gently across the net. Ted moved no jab- bed at the spinning globule of white. It bounced off the edge of his racket. Briefly he paused. Then he stumbled from the court. He dropped onto a bench, leaned forward, elbows on knees.

Sue hesitated. This seemed to be the critical moment. Everyone else had given Ted up as a bad job. Everyone was derisive about his timidity, his fear. She walked along the edge of the court and sat down beside him.

"That's that," he said. "We'll call it quits."

"That's no way to do," Sue said. "I remember when I first began to play . . ."

"It isn't just tennis!" Ted interrupted angrily. "It's dancing, people, boating, everything—I'm no good at anything!"

Sue didn't answer. Her attention was attracted by an elfin figure hopping and skipping across the lawn toward them. Bright golden curls dancing about her pert face. Pep paused before them.

"I've been watching you," Pep announced in a lilting voice.

Ted looked somberly at her. "You didn't see much."

"Nope." A roguish smile tilted Pep's bright red mouth. "You sure aren't so hot, are you?"

Sue said, "Pep! That'll be enough!"

"It's okay," Ted chuckled. "Pep's really got something there. I imagine she plays better tennis herself."

Pep ventured a little closer. "I

guess you haven't ever played much before."

"No," Ted admitted.

"Most boys play basketball or football or something like that. Didn't you ever have ath-letics in school?"

Ted answered quietly, "I never went in much for sports."

Sue leaned toward her little sister. "Pep, you'd better run along. You're much too precocious for your age."

"I'm what?" Pep demanded testily.

"Precocious," Sue replied firmly. "That means . . ."

"It doesn't mean me!" Pep retorted defiantly. "Besides, Ted doesn't mind . . ."

"Pep!" Sue stood up.

Curls dancing gaily, Pep took off up the slope. Amused laughter drifted back.

Sue returned to the bench. Glancing swiftly at Ted, she saw that his face was still somber, still brooding. He appealed to her, but she didn't understand why. He was new in town, and Bill had thought inviting him here would be a good way for the gang to meet him. But now even Bill had given him up as a bad job. So had just about everybody else—except perhaps Fran who thought she was just about the right answer to everything, Fran who needled Sue about her efforts at salvaging Ted.

"This is only your third lesson," Sue said. "You're probably nervous. It was the same the other day when Matty was hanging around."

"Matty's quite a guy," Ted said, "even if he did needle me. He dances well and gets along with everyone. You'd better start paying more attention to him. He likes you a lot."

Ted paused. Then he blurted, "Besides Matty doesn't try to cram stuff down my throat. You and Bill—everyone's trying to teach me something. It's getting tiresome. I wish everyone would leave me alone!"

He stood up, grabbed his racket and hurried away across the lawn. Bewildered and angry, Sue watched his tall, broad shouldered figure disappear.

That, she decided, settles it. I'll leave him alone. Let Bill worry about him. Ted is Bill's guest anyhow, not mine. And Fran . . .

Sue wiped angry tears from her eyes, started to rise.

A pert voice said, "You like Ted, don't you, Sis?"

Sue turned slowly to face Pep, who had approached from the back.

"I think he's stuffy," Sue snapped. "And stubborn. And bullheaded. He makes me mad!"

"Gee. You're got it bad."

"I've got it bad?"

"Uh-huh. If you could see yourself . . ."

"I'll live," Sue muttered. "This will teach me never to butt into other people's lives. It serves me right!"

. . . Night had come, bringing a cool breeze from the bay, the whisper of waves along the shore. In the house on the hill the party was in full swing. Sue looked longingly back. I'm being a poor sport, she thought. Sour grapes. She sat down on a log. The smell of the beach was tangy and pungent. The moon cut a jagged reflection across the gleaming water.

Restlessly Sue poked at the dried seaweed at her feet. She hated the thought that she had run away from a disagreeable situation, but she had done all she could.

Slow steps crunched. Ted stepped across the log, sat down beside her.

"I guess you're angry," he said. "I don't blame you."

Sue felt resentment coming to a brisk boil within her. "What are you doing here?"

"There was nothing for me to do up there," he said. "I tramped on Fran's toes for a couple of dances. Maybe she'll lay off now!"

"Which is what you want."

Ted glanced sideways at her. Sue watched his hands twist each other. Powerful hands, she realized. Hands that had seen hard use. Ted was strong and darkly tanned. He wasn't a sissy. Why then was he so timid? And so backward? He was like two people, the first shy and afraid, the other powerful and strong. Yet the first one seemed the dominating force.

What sort of things does he like, Sue wondered? Where did he come from? What have his home and his schools been like? And his parents? If only I knew the answers to these questions . . .

"I've never lived like this," Ted said, "dancing and playing games."

"I'm not sticking my chin out," the girl replied.

She felt his eyes upon her. I almost believe he *wants* to be friends, she thought.

"Matty is up there," he said. "He's a swell guy. He gets along with everyone, he can take part in any sport, and he wears good clothes. Look at the difference between him and me. I'll bet he'd talk about his folks . . ." Abruptly Ted choked off the words.

Silence. The wind scattering the kelp. Distant waves washing the face of the beach over and over again.

Sue stood up. "We'd better go."

His lips twisted. "Not taking any more chances?"

Sue frowned. "I tried to help once. You wouldn't let me!"

Swiftly she turned away. There was no use arguing. He doesn't care, he doesn't want to explain. He'll go away before long . . . Will that be bad, Sue wondered? Would it really matter?

It would matter terribly. I like Ted, she thought. I like him a lot. And I know he could be so different. So swell and likable!

. . . The following afternoon most of the crowd gathered for a boat ride. There were six couples in all. When the soft thrumming of the speedboat had died out across the water, Sue walked down to the beach. She thought at first that Ted had gone with the others. But down the shore a short distance she discovered him with Pep.

He was giving Pep advice about handling a canoe paddle. Sue paused, still unobserved, and watched. Ted was, she saw uneasily, an expert with a canoe. It was one of his many facets which were so hard to understand, a link with his past and perhaps the answer to his problem.

Sue approached. Ted looked up quickly. A light flush colored his face.

He said to Pep, "She's spying on us."

Pep nodded. Her blond curls danced. She told Sue, "Ted's showing me how to paddle. He says I'll be an expert."

"Ted doesn't know what he's talking about."

"He does so," Pep declared. "Ted knows more than you think!"

Nervousness touched Sue. She met Ted's perplexed eyes, noted the grimness of his lips. Pep paddled a short distance from shore, making each stroke long and powerful, then turning the blade so it acted as a rudder at the end of the stroke.

Sue said, "Pep seems to understand you better than anyone else."

"She's the best one of the bunch," Ted commented.

Sue dropped down onto the beach. Her mind was in a turmoil now. Here was something new and unexpected.

Ted sank down near her. He wrapped his arms around his knees. The grimness of his face reminded the girl of a jagged mountain.

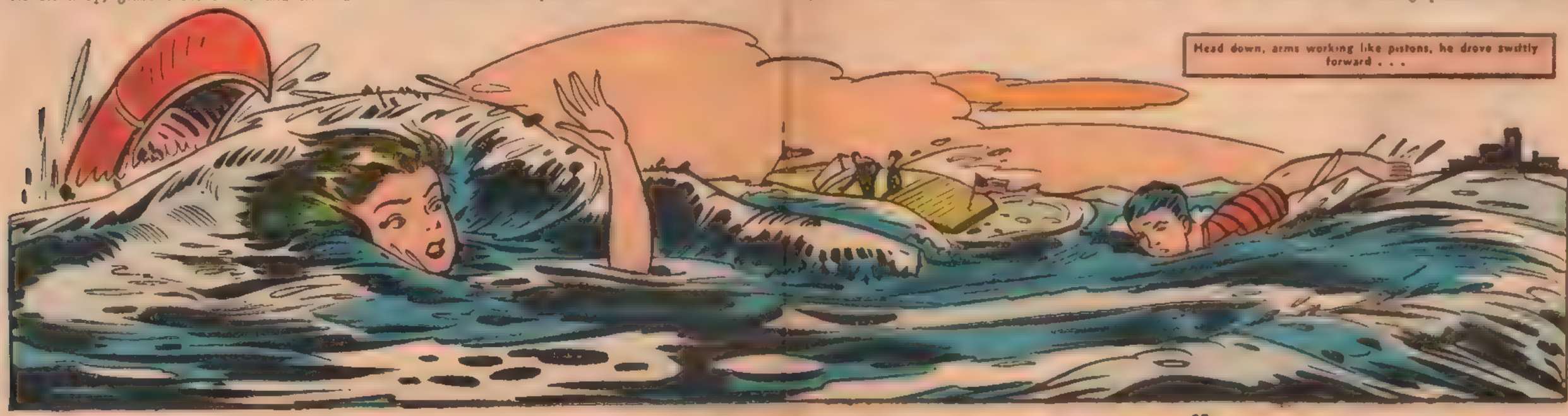
"I'll leave in a day or two," he said.

"Oh? In a hurry?"

"I'm only in the way."

"Pep doesn't think so." Sue watched the canoe, now well out from shore. Uneasiness crawled into her throat. She said, "Pep's out pretty far."

The noise of the returning speedboat reached the



Head down, arms working like pistons, he drove swiftly forward . . .

girl's ears. Her eyes turned. She saw the boat hurtle around a point of land. The nose was up, and water cascaded from the prow. Matty was at the wheel. Sue knew. I hope he sees where he's going, she thought quickly.

Suddenly she slid to her feet. "Pep!" she yelled. "Pep . . ."

Ted leaped up, moved to the water's edge.

"Doesn't the fool see her?" he cried.

"Matty's at the wheel. He's a show-off."

The speedboat was rushing straight toward the canoe. Fear became a knotted fist in the girl's throat.

"*Pep!*" she screamed. "*Pep!*"

At the last second the boat swerved, shot past the canoe. The violent dash of waves struck the frail craft. For one horrible second it balanced upon the crest of a wave. Pep leaped to her feet!

The canoe toppled over. There was a splash, and a small body was thrashing the water.

Ted yanked off his jacket, kicked aside his shoes. He took a running leap, struck the water cleanly. Head down, arms working like pistons, he drove swiftly forward . . .

After a nightmare of time he returned, holding Pep's wilted little body in his arms. He leaped to dry ground.

"Pep!" Sue moaned. "Pep . . ."

Ted was applying artificial respiration. The hull of a boat ground angrily on the beach. Voices accumulated in a gust of sound.

"Keep back!" Ted snapped. "All of you. Sue, have you something dry to put over her?"

Ted is running this show. Sue realized remotely. Running it competently. This is the real Ted. He knows exactly what to do.

Matty was crouching down. His face was white, covered with a mist of sweat.

Ted glared at him. "You must be out of your head! Only a chump would try to scare a child!"

Pep coughed. Her eyes opened. Blackness filmed Sue's gaze as she realized Pep would be all right. Thanks to—Ted!

. . . Evening had come. Sue listened to the rush of waves. She glanced at Ted, seated beside her at the edge of the boathouse.

"Matty was showing off!" Ted said.

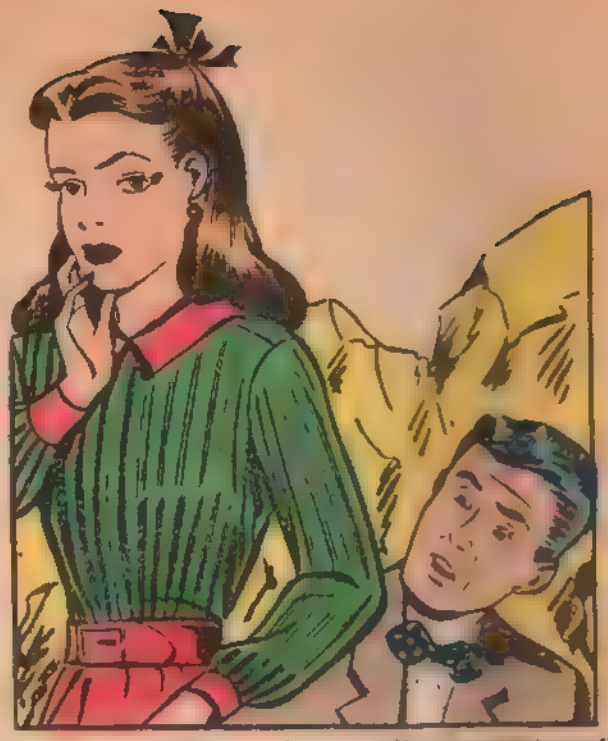
Sue studied Ted's face. He was no longer timid and frightened.

"And you wanted to be like him'".

Ted hesitated. Then he said slowly, "I was born and brought up on a river. My father was a river man. We ate, drank, lived that river. I was a—river rat! When I went to school, the kids made fun of me. Of my clothes. Of the smell of the river that was always with me. I came to hate it. I resolved to get away from it and from everything that reminded me of it!"

Sue felt his groping indecision. Matty, his model, had failed. "But you learned something as a boy, as a 'river rat,' that's priceless," she said desperately. "If it hadn't been for that life you led, tonight Pep would be—dead! And all because of the thoughtlessness of the person you wanted to be like!"

Hurrying footsteps sounded. Ted's face lit up



Sue frowned. "I tried to help once. You wouldn't let me!" Swiftly she turned away

softly as Pep skipped around the corner of the boathouse. Her bright, still slightly pale face broke into a shy smile.

"Hi," Pep greeted. "I've been looking for you."

Ted chuckled. "Well, here we are. I suppose you're ready for your next lesson?"

Pep advanced cautiously. "What lesson?"

"In canoeing."

"Ted," Sue whispered swiftly, "no . . ."

Disregarding her plea, Ted said, "You were just getting the hang of it."

Pep hesitated. "What—comes next?"

"Learning how to handle a canoe in rough water. It's easy. All you have to do is ride with the canoe in whatever direction it goes. And never get excited like you did this afternoon."

"That was foolish, I guess."

"Those are things you've got to learn. So tomorrow morning . . ."

Pep nodded. "Okay." She paused nervously. "I—I guess I should apologize for something."

"Apologize?"

"Uh-huh. Don't you remember?" Pep looked uneasily down into Ted's tanned face. "The other day at the tennis court? I said—you weren't so—hot . . ."

Ted laughed good-naturedly. "Forget it," he said gently. "All's forgiven. Shake?"

"Sure." Pep put her tiny hand into his powerful grip. "But it wasn't right."

"The day you said that you were right, Pep," Ted said quietly. "Since then we've all learned a little more. I know I have."

Pep looked only half convinced. But she said, "Okay. And don't forget. We've got a date for tomorrow morning!"

THE END

SURE-FIRE SUPPER . . .

If you're worried about that supper or luncheon for 12 or so that you're planning for after the big game, try this menu for easy success.

Get about 5 pounds of beef shortribs and have the butcher cut them into portion size. Wipe them with a damp cloth and rub them with salt and pepper. Put them into a deep kettle with a little fat, and arrange over them a layer of onion slices. Drop in a couple of bay leaves, some minced parsley, 3 or 4 whole cloves and a scant teaspoon of whole peppercorns. Cover the kettle, and bake for 2 hours in a moderate oven.

Then add 1½ cans of sauerkraut, pushing it in beneath the ribs to mix well with the drippings, and cover the ribs with another 1½ cans sauerkraut. Add some water or stock to moisten the kraut.

Cover and return to the oven for another hour, turning and stirring occasionally. Serve with plenty of boiled potatoes dressed with butter and chopped chives.

Whether the game is won or lost, this meal will rate high!

BROCCOLI BRUNCH . . .

Tired of eating broccoli just plain with butter? Weary of making Hollandaise sauce for it? Try it as broccoli au gratin to give an old dish a "new look"!

Peel the woody stems of a bunch of broccoli and steam it, flowerets up, in boiling salted water until tender. Drain. Separate stems and flowerets carefully and lay them neatly in a buttered baking dish.

Make a sauce of 3 tablespoons butter, 3 tablespoons flour, 1½ cups milk, salt and pepper. A little cayenne is a help. When the sauce has thickened, add ¼ cup of grated cheese.

When the cheese has melted and the sauce is smooth, pour it over the broccoli in the baking dish. Top with bread crumbs and dot with butter. Bake in a moderate oven until the crumbs are a golden brown.

ROAST RELISH . . .

If you feel like potting around the kitchen and have a couple of hours to spare, try this extra-special roast.

Get 2 pounds of round steak, cut into serving pieces, sprinkle with lemon juice and dip in 2 tablespoons good olive oil, letting the meat marinate for 10 minutes at least. Dredge it with flour to which salt and pepper have been added.

Put 4 tablespoons olive oil in a frying pan and get it good and hot, but not smoking. Sear the pieces of meat all over to a golden color and then put them in a baking pan with the pan juices, 2 chopped onions and a little garlic if you like. Over the meat pour 3 cups strained, canned, or stewed tomatoes, 1 tablespoon of brown sugar and a cup of water. Cover and bake for 3½ hours in a VERY slow oven.

See if you don't agree with us that it's a "roast relish."

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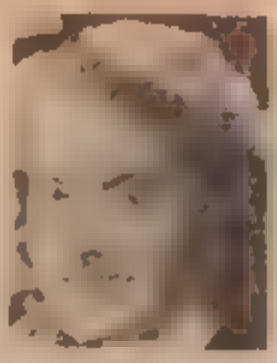

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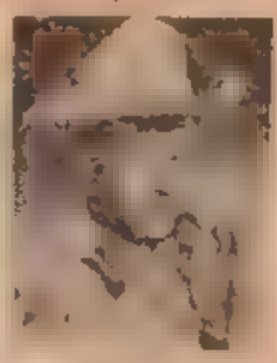

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IMAGINATION'S A WONDERFUL THING — EXCEPT WHEN TWO PEOPLE WITH EQUALLY GREAT AMOUNTS OF IT GET TOGETHER! THEN WATCH OUT!

After you, Duchess

By TRIPP HAMMOND

"Oh, come earlyish, around eight. . . . Right. I'll send the chauffeur for you."

"PORTER, will you check my compartment and see if I've packed everything?" Denise Dierck hoped she sounded a bit older than seventeen. After all, the elegant young man beside her in the lounge car must be at *least* eighteen.

"Are you traveling without a maid?" the young

a bore," she said talking about New York. *Actually*, I prefer it out of season. One do the theater not art so much more I surely."

"It sounds better than Newport," the young man said. "As one was there to speak of. Perhaps I'll plan on staying in the city next year, and we could get around together a bit."

Denise graciously smiled her agreement. Then she rose. "I'm afraid I'm off at the next " she said holding out r hand It was cha of you to take pity on a lonely t

He accepted her hand and stood up. "It's been delightful, Miss

"Denise van Dierck."

"And I'm Charles Prescott Willoworth the Third," he said. "I'm looking forward to seeing you in Palm Beach."

you should be around here in the meantime" , "my ancestral acres are at your dispos

little station at Plauk Falls was deserted one figure in overalls. His round, freckled face lighted at the sight of her. "Why, Stanley Wilson!" Denise exclaimed. "How charming of you to come for me

The light went out of his face. "I should have expected it," he said disgustedly. "You've had a month in New York with your aunt so that makes you the Duchess of Whatsis. What I have to put up with!"

"My dear boy, really . . ."

"Don't you 'my-dear' me!" he nearly shouted. Then his eyes narrowed. "I get it. You've been giving train a long line

"It is a source of amazement to me, Stanley, that I ever saw anything in you but remnants of the " she said. "It is your only obvious character-

Stanley grabbed her bags and flung them into the back of his battered old truck. "All I can say is, I feel sorry for the poor guy," he said when they'd started

r quaint scott Willo- too. Uses horses, rides then to hounds

okay. I'm licked. I admit i Stanley e to meet you because I had good news you to a hay ride party next Saturday

How pastoral—in a ghastly sort of way!" Denise sighed mournfully. "I'm afraid I shall be otherwise engaged

She remained

. . . she saw. The shutter dining room window still hung askew chicken pecked forlornly at the drive. Her brother George was still working on his car, parts of which were scattered over the lawn

"Wiggles!" Georg exclaimed. He put his head car window and kissed her. "How was York? See any fights at the Garden?"

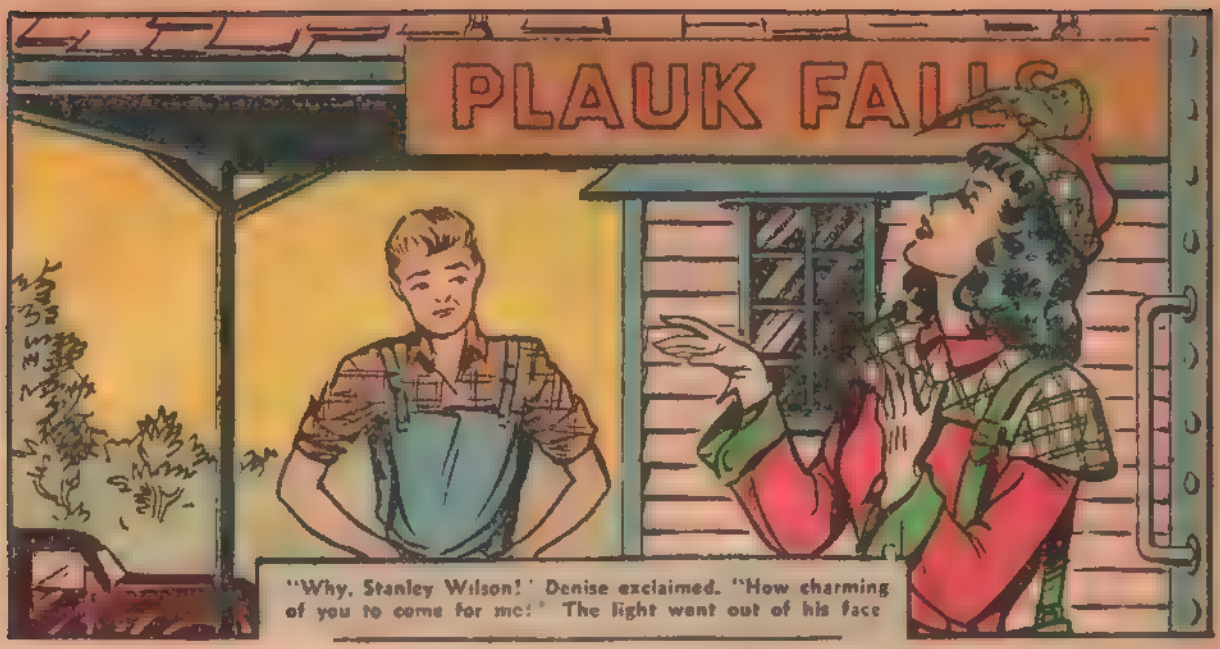
"No fights," she said

her bags

ing clatter on the stairs. Daisy, her younger sister appeared. "Hey, Wiggles," the fourteen-year-old girl yelled, "see any gang wars in New York?" She dropped behind the railing, pointed her finger and

Daisy, *when* will you grow up?" Denise said wearily

Daisy straightened. "What d'you mean, grow up?" she demanded. "I have already, and I can prove it. I'm in love. I'm terribly in love with Stanley Wilson!"



"Why, Stanley Wilson!" Denise exclaimed. "How charming of you to come for me!" The light went out of his face

"You're too young to talk such nonsense," Denise said.

Daisy leaned over the banister. "I *am?*" she asked sarcastically. "Just give me half an hour with him. You just *think* he's crazy about you. Mere infatuation. Make it only fifteen minutes!"

Then Denise smelled cabbage cooking in the kitchen and knew she was home.

After the excitement of New York Denise found it difficult to adjust again to life on a farm near Plauk Falls. At breakfast the next morning her family tried to help.

"Wiggles, dear," her mother said, "old Mr. and Mrs. Tetley want you over for supper tonight."

"*Must* I—so soon?" Denise wailed.

"Now, dear, they're our neighbors, and they're very fond of you."

"Mother, maybe Wiggles has a date tonight with Charles Prescott Willoworth the Third," her brother said.

"Charles Willoworth the Third!" Daisy scoffed. "There ain't no such animal."

"No, no, Daisy," her mother admonished. "It's better to say, 'Charles is a figment of Denise's imagination.'"

Her father looked up sternly. "Stop mooning, Wiggles, and do as your mother says."

"Did it occur to you, Father, that I *might* have a previous social commitment?" Denise asked.

At that moment the mailman opened the door and walked in. "Hi, folks. Glad to see you back. Wiggles." He handed her a letter. "Is that yours? It's addressed kind of funny."

The letter was addressed to Miss Denise van Dierck, General Delivery, Plauk Falls. It came from the Colonial Inn, the town's fashionable resort hotel. She tore it open eagerly.

"Dear Miss van Dierck," she read. "My plans were changed, and I find myself in your part of the world. I shall be here until tomorrow morning. Isn't the Inn priceless? Its pretense to antique elegance I find exquisitely amusing! Perhaps I can have an odd spot of tea with you if you have time. Anyway, do please call me. Sincerely, Charles Prescott Willoworth III."

Denise looked up and smiled pityingly at her family. There was a faraway look in her eyes. She rushed to the telephone and called the Inn. "I wish to speak to Charles Prescott Willoworth," she enunciated the name carefully. Charles? . . . What a *lovely* surprise! . . . You are? . . . Splendid. Look here, I *must* have you for dinner tonight. No, I insist . . . Oh, come earlyish, around eight . . . Right. I'll send the chauffeur for you." She hung up and smiled dreamily at her mother. "I'm afraid you'll just *have* to make my excuses to the Tetleys," she said.

"But did I understand you to invite that young man here to dinner tonight?" her mother asked confusedly.

A look of horror crept over Denise's face. "Oh, no!" she cried. "What did I *say*? I can't have him *here*!"

"Wiggles just forgot," her brother explained to the others. "She was thinking this house was an old southern mansion with a staff of fifty servants for her personal use."

"What am I going to *do?*" Denise wailed.

"Dad will let you take the car. Drive over and get him," her mother said. "I'll roast a chicken, and we'll send to the drug store for ice cream."

"No, *no!*" Denise screamed.

"A thousand times no," Daisy said. "The Willoworth blue blood might turn red with shame in these surroundings."

"Listen," Denise said desperately. "Granny's place in the village might do. Those antiques could look decent if they were arranged properly. She could cook, Daisy could wait on the table and George could chauffeur."

"NO!" the shout came from everyone.

Denise went to the first landing on the stairs. She

put the back of her wrist against her forehead. "It is my tragedy to be born sensitive and high-strung in a family of brutes," she said melodramatically. She turned and slowly mounted the stairs.

It worked.

"Come back!" they cried.

Denise clattered down the stairs.

"Only because you're my sister would I consent to a thing like this," George said. "But it will cost you plenty."

"Have your pound of flesh," she said.

"For two weeks I want exclusive use of the car when Dad doesn't want it."

"My services also will be expensive, my beautiful but silly sister," Daisy said.

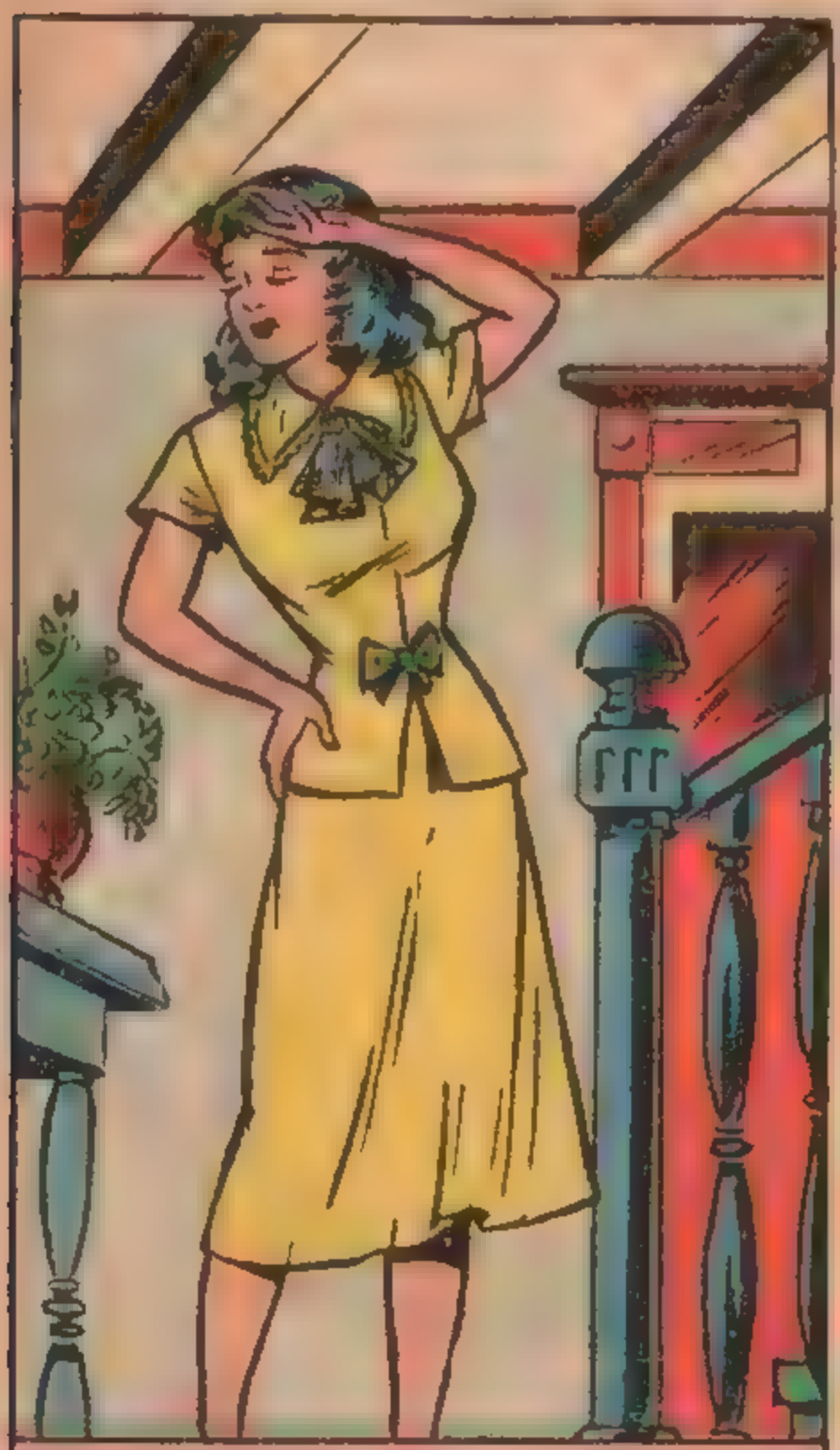
"Incipient blackmailer," Denise hissed.

"Stanley Wilson. I want to go on the hay ride party with him. You fix it up."

"And you must promise to see the Tetleys tomorrow," her mother said.

"And if I catch you in this kind of nonsense again," her father said, "I'll turn you over my knee."

"Well, I guess I'd better get movin'," the mailman said. "Sure is nice to see you folks back to normal again."



It is my tragedy to be born sensitive and high-strung in a family of brutes," she said melodramatically.

Granny, at least, was a willing partner to the plot. She was glad of an excuse to use her good silverware and the old linen, and she was enthusiastic about Denise's menu which was taken from a stylish women's magazine.

Denise spent the morning shopping and rearranging furniture. She spent the afternoon making over an old summer formal into a simple but good-looking dinner gown. At eight o'clock, as she was putting the finishing touches to her hair, the door was opened by her semi-uniformed brother who stood at military attention. Charles, elegant in white dinner jacket, strolled in.

"Charles, this is *delightful!*" Denise greeted him, her arm extended.

"Isn't it fun?" he agreed. "You know, really, I've never been quite so completely in the backwoods before. Should one carry an old flintlock along the roads at night?"

She took his arm. "Oh, it's not necessary now," she said. "The Indians haven't attacked a settlement around here for at least a fortnight."

As they laughed, she turned to George. "I'll call you when I need you," she said

"*Okay*, mademoiselle." He clicked his heels.

Fortunately Charles did not notice George's slip. He was admiring a Chippendale. "What a charming little place you have!" he exclaimed. "How pleasant to see such perfect simplicity after the vulgar showiness of the newly rich."

Denise sighed with relief. Now if Daisy would not spill [illegible] up on him, she might get away with the act. When she rang the bell, there was no answer for a moment. Then Daisy burst through the door and sprinted across the room. She slammed down two plates of soup. "The soup's cold, but the plates are hot," she explained. "Granny got mixed up."

"Relatives of the old lady who runs the house," Denise said, indicating the servants. "A family retainer, you know. She's a dear, but difficult at times."

"I can understand that servants must be a problem out here," Charles sympathized, "although your chauffeur seemed civil enough for a bumpkin."

Abruptly Daisy appeared again. "The chauffeur says he must speak to you, mademoiselle. He says it's important."

"All right, Daisy. Show him in," Denise sighed.

George whispered in her ear. "That crack about a bumpkin will cost you another week without the car. Do I get it, or do I make a scene?"

"Very well, George," she said.

Denise found that she no longer had an appetite. But she was glad to see that Charles had noticed nothing amiss and was eating heartily—until the dessert, that is. He was about to help himself from the serving plate when Daisy shook her head. "Not that one!" Daisy almost shouted.

Charles looked up in surprise.

"The cat licked it," she explained in a hoarse whisper.

After coffee was served in the drawing room, the "servants" were no longer required and the evening

went smoothly. At twelve Charles rose and made his thanks and good-bys charmingly as usual. But at the door he turned and hesitated. "Denise, you don't know what this evening has meant to me," he said. "I shall miss you—very much." Then he was gone.

Denise spent a sleepless night. Oh, why did he have to come here? she thought. Now he'd return to his own world of color and excitement, leaving her life depressingly drab. After him, the boys she knew would be unbearably dull—and she'd never see him again.

. . . The next day she was a dutiful daughter. The Tetleys came to dinner to visit her, and she was exceptionally polite to them. Afterward, while they visited with her mother in the kitchen, she sat in the living room with her father. Suddenly through the window she saw a figure turn off the road into their drive. She jumped up, her heart in her throat. It was Charles!

She felt her father's hand on her shoulder. "It'll be hard, dear," he said softly, "but you must face it squarely. Tell him the truth."

Tears blinded her, but she nodded and slowly went out to meet Charles. He jumped when he saw her. "Denise!" he cried. "You here?"

"Charles, I have something to tell you," she said firmly.

He nodded sadly. "I know what you're going to say," he said, "but let me say it. I'll tell you the whole truth. My father's in wholesale groceries. He was transferred from New York to Chicago, and my mother went with him. I was to join them before school began and stop over here for a day to see my mother's parents, the Tetleys. But I just got a telegram from my father, saying they haven't enough room for me yet. So I have to stay and go to school here this fall . . . I don't blame you for loathing me."

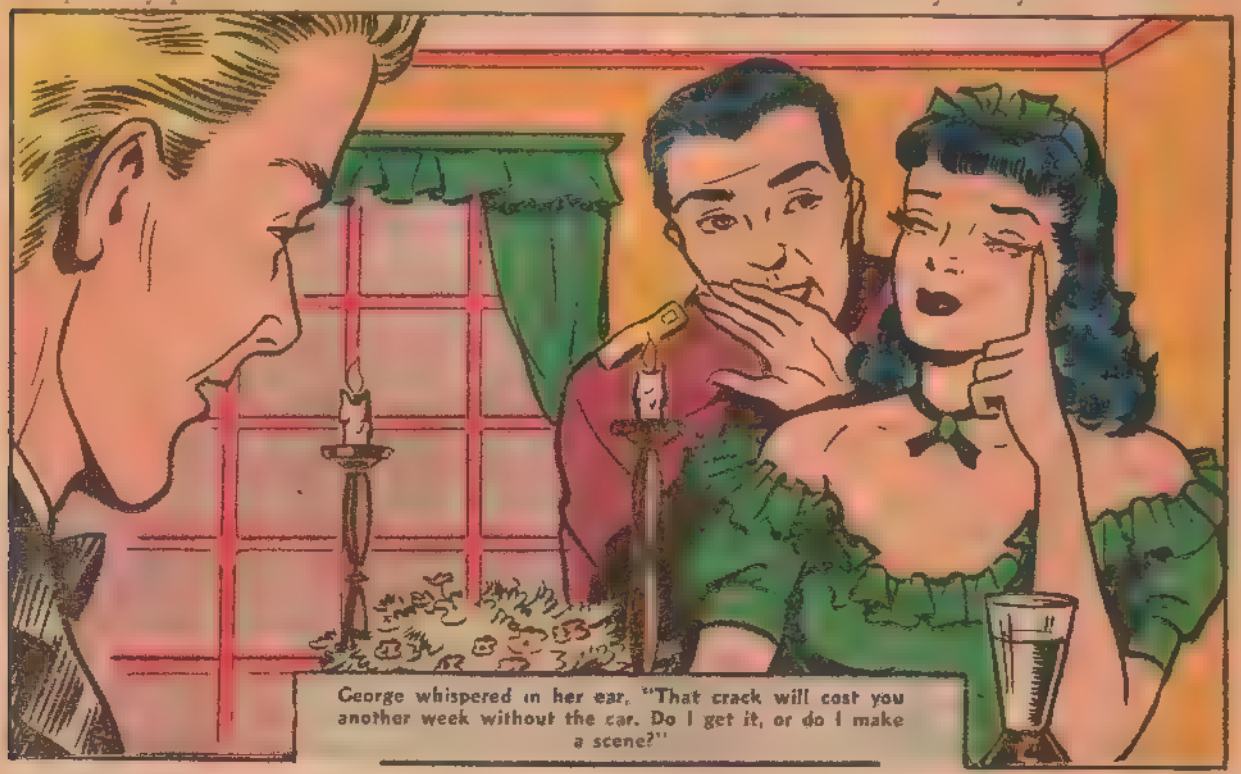
Denise didn't know whether to laugh or cry so she did a little of both. "Oh, Charles, Charles, how wonderful!" she exclaimed. "I've been just as bad. I'm only a farmer's daughter. I live *here*."

Charles blinked and shook his head. "I don't understand," he said. "What about your servants?"

"My brother and sister. And the house was my grandmother's!"

It took a moment for this to sink in. Then Charles grabbed her suddenly by the arms. "*No*, Denise! This is too good to be true!"

"Come on," she said. "The Tetleys are inside. You must meet the rest of my family."



George whispered in her ear, "That crack will cost you another week without the car. Do I get it, or do I make a scene?"

"What will we say to them?" he asked.

"Tell them it was all a big joke," she said. "Don't worry—I've had plenty of experience with this kind of situation.

"You *couldn't* have had more than *I've* had," he said.

Then they sat on the porch, their arms linked, and laughed until tears rolled down their faces. "Never, *never* again!" Denise declared emphatically.

"*Never!*" Charles agreed.

. . . The night was perfect for a hay ride party, and the singing was soft and romantic. Denise sat back happily, her head resting on Charles' shoulder.

"Isn't this wonderful?" he said. "It reminds me of a party some of the stars gave for me in Hollywood . . ."

"Oh, Hollywood!" Denise sighed rapturously. "I haven't been there for simply *ages*!"

There they go again," Stanley Wilson said resignedly. But then he turned to smile tenderly down at Daisy.

THE END

TURNOVER TEMPTATION . . .

If blueberries are a favorite with you, then you'll love preparing them this slightly different way—and you'll have a turnover that's tops.

Make a regular biscuit dough from your favorite recipe or ready-mix. Roll it out ¼ inch thick, brush it with melted butter and cut it in 3-inch squares.

Mix a cup of blueberries with 2 tablespoons sugar, a tablespoon of flour and a tablespoon of lemon juice. Put a good spoonful in the middle of each square of dough. Fold the dough over, making a triangle. Stick together by pressing with the tines of a fork. Prick once or twice on top and bake turnovers in a hot oven on a greased sheet for about 25 minutes. Serve them with plain cream.

SUN ON THE BEAM . . .

If you want to remind him of the food that "mother used to make", try these old-time currant buns. They're definitely on the beam!

Add 2 tablespoons powdered sugar to a half cake of yeast and a cup of lukewarm water. Stir until yeast and sugar are dissolved. Add 3 well-beaten eggs and a tablespoon of softened, but not melted, butter. Stir this into 4 cups of bread flour sifted with a half teaspoon of salt and a ¼ teaspoon of soda.

Knead into a soft elastic dough, set aside and let rise until double in bulk. Turn into a lightly floured mixing bowl, and then add a cup of well-washed dried currants and mix well to spread them thoroughly through the dough. If you like lots of currants, add as many as you want.

Shape the dough into buns, and again let them rise until double in bulk. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

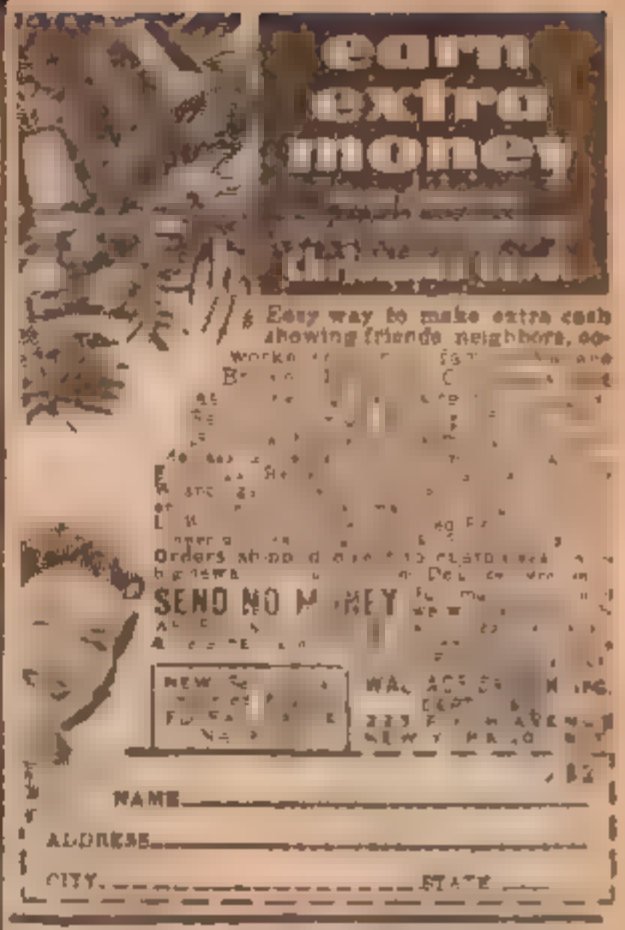
And you won't have to hunt hard for that nostalgic look in his eyes!

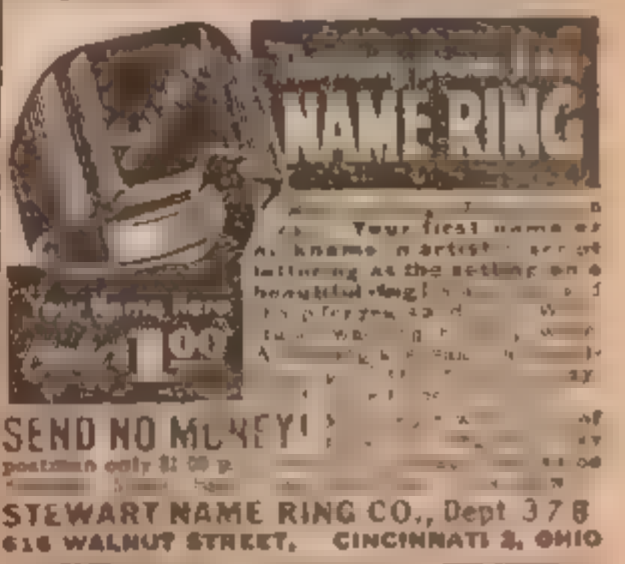
BISCUITS BAKING! . . .

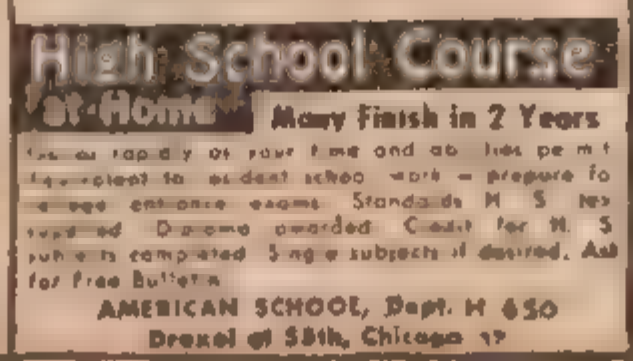
It's a simple matter to whip up some hot biscuits if you have everything ready ahead of time. Here's a very good and somewhat different recipe to speed up your preparations.

Mix together a quart of milk that has been scalded and cooled, a cup of mashed potatoes, half a cup of sugar, a cup of shortening and 1 yeast cake dissolved in half a cup of lukewarm water. Stir in 2 teaspoons of baking powder, a teaspoon of soda and a teaspoon of salt. Add enough sifted flour to make a soft batter, and let this rise until the surface is bubbly. Add more flour to make a stiff dough, and then knead until firm and elastic. Put in a greased bowl and store in the refrigerator.

Whenever you get the urge to make biscuits, pinch off the amount you need, let it rise for one hour, cut it into shape, and bake in a pre-heated oven at 425 degrees for 15 minutes.







PATSY WALKER

GOSH, PATSY, DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE *THIS* GOOD! YOUR PAINTING OF ME IS A PERFECT LIKENESS!
ER-UH, NANCY, THAT'S A *MIRROR* YOU'RE LOOKING AT! THE PORTRAIT IS OVER HERE!
"ART IN THE HEART!"
A.J. 40
HI YA, GANG!
HI, PATSY!
WELL, YOU CERTAINLY DO HAVE YOUR HANDS FULL!

PATSY, WHAT'S THE IDEA OF ALL THAT ARTIST'S EQUIPMENT?

HAVEN'T YOU *HEARD*, NANCY? THE FINE ARTS GALLERY IS HAVING A PUBLIC EXHIBIT AND THE BEST PAINTER WINS A TWO WEEK VACATION AT AN *ARTISTS' CAMP* THIS SUMMER!

IMAGINE THE WONDERFUL *ATMOSPHERE!* TWO WEEKS AMONG TALENTED PEOPLE AT A LUXURIOUS SUMMER CAMP WITH NOTHING TO DO ALL DAY BUT PAINT AND ENJOY LIFE! AHH...*THAT'S* FOR *ME!*

HA! HA! HA! *YOU* AT AN ARTISTS' CAMP! I CAN'T IMAGINE *ANYONE* MORE OUT OF *PLACE!* BESIDES, YOU COULDN'T WIN IF YOU WERE THE ONLY ENTRANT!

S THAT *SO?* AT LEAST I'VE GOT TALENT ENOUGH TO ENTER—WHICH IS MORE THAN I CAN SAY FOR *YOU*, MISS WOLFE!

TALENT? HAH! YOU MEAN *NERVE!* AND ANYWAY, FOR YOUR INFORMATION, I COME FROM A LONG LINE OF ARTISTS! WE HAVE MANY PAINTINGS AT HOME BY MY GRANDFATHER, THE FAMOUS *CYRUS* WOLFE!

SO FAR YOU'VE DONE NOTHING BUT *TALK!*

THAT *DOES* IT! I'LL SHOW YOU! NOW YOU WON'T HAVE *ANY* CHANCE AT ALL OF WINNING! I'M GO NG TO ENTER THAT CONTEST AND SHOW YOU UP!

OH, DON'T LET HER WORRY YOU, PATSY!

YES! YOU GO RIGHT AHEAD AND DO YOUR BEST!

I'M NOT WORR-ED! SHE'S JUST BLUFFING, AS USUAL!

BUT I DO NEED A MODEL! HOW ABOUT IT, NANCY?
SURE, PATSY! BUT LET'S GET STARTED! I'M REALLY INTERESTED IN SEEING YOU BEAT HEDY OUT!
LATER
HOW'S THIS?
NO! I DON'T THINK THAT'S QUITE RIGHT! WE'LL HAVE TO GET A LITTLE MORE LIGHT!
NO! STILL NOT RIGHT! I DON'T LIKE THE WAY YOU'RE STANDING!
IS THIS BETTER? I MOVED MY FEET A LITTLE!
I THINK YOU'LL HAVE TO USE JUST A TINY BIT DARKER SHADE OF LIPSTICK!
OKAY!
AND AFTER SOME TIME...
GOLLY, PATSY! AREN'T YOU READY TO PAINT YET? I'M GETTING TIRED BEFORE WE START!
ALL SET NOW, NANCY! I'M SORRY, BUT I MUST GET EVERYTHING JUST RIGHT IF I EXPECT TO WIN!
SO
3

T ME MARCHES ON

AND STILL MORE TIME MARCHES ON

WHEW! PATSY! I THINK I'M *PARALYZED!*

A FEW MORE MINUTES AND I'LL BE ALL FINISHED!

MEANWHILE

JAMES, DO YOU KNOW WHERE ALL GRANDPA'S PAINTINGS ARE?

YES, MISS! I REMEMBER SEEING THEM IN THE *ATTIC!*

JAMES, I WANT YOU TO DUST OFF THE *BEST* ONE AND BRING IT TO ME!

YES, MISS!

ARE YOU SURE THIS IS A *GOOD* ONE?

YES, MISS! THIS IS TRULY A *MASTERPIECE!*

NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS PAINT OUT THE NAME OF *CYRUS* AND SUBSTITUTE THE NAME *HEDY!*

OIL PAINT

Cyrus Wolfe

AND BACK AT PATSY'S

ALL FINISHED! AND IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF, NANCY, I THINK IT'S SLIGHTLY *TERRIFIC!* AN AMAZING RESEMBLANCE! A *MASTERPIECE!*

OH, GOOD! I'M *DYING* TO SEE IT!

ULP!
OH PATSY, YOU MEAN THAT'S WHAT LOOK LIKE TO YOU? MY FRIEND?
OF COURSE! WHY, WHAT'S WRONG?
OH, ER-NOTHING! I'M JUST PLEASED TO-ER, KNOW YOU HAVE SUCH A FLATTERING OPINION OF ME! (UGH!)
OH, GOLLY! I HAVEN'T GOT THE HEART TO TELL HER WHAT I REALLY THINK OF IT! NO MATTER HOW BAD HEDY'S PAINTING IS, IT CAN'T POSSIBLY BE WORSE THAN THIS! GOSH!
WELL, LET'S HURRY, NANCY! I'VE GOT TO ENTER THE EXH BITION! I CAN JUST SEE THE LOOK ON HEDY'S FACE WHEN SHE SEES THIS MASTERPIECE OF MODERN ART!
YES, PATSY!
UNFORTUNATELY, THE LOOK ON HER FACE IS BOUND TO BE ONE OF HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER!
LOOK, NANCY, HERE COMES HEDY!
HELLO, PATSY! I'M AFRAID YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME HERE!

CRASH!

YOU! YOU LITTLE URCHINS! WHY DON'T YOU WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING? NOW GET BACK TO THE *SLUMS* WHERE YOU BELONG, YOU LITTLE MONSTERS!

G-GOLLY! I'M SORRY, L-LADY! I-I DIDN'T MEAN TO! GOSH!

(SNIF)

REALLY, HEDY! I THINK YOU OUGHT TO BE *ASHAMED* OF YOURSELF FOR TALKING TO THESE POOR LITTLE CHILDREN LIKE THAT!

GO AHEAD AND *DEFEND* THE LITTLE RUFFIANS! YOU'RE ON *THEIR* SOCIAL LEVEL!

THERE, THERE, CHILDREN! DON'T PAY ANY ATTENTION TO THAT GIRL! SHE'S VERY ILL-BRED! BY THE WAY, WHERE ARE YOU TWO GOING?

WE WERE TAKING THIS PICTURE TO THE PICTURE EXHIBIT, BUT NOW WE'RE AFRAID TO GO IN!

AW, THE POOR LITTLE KIDS ARE PROBABLY DELIVERING A PAINTING FOR SOME ARTIST!

YES! AND I'LL BET IF THEY DON'T DELIVER IT, THEY WON'T GET *PAID*! THE POOR LITTLE THINGS *NEED* THE MONEY, TOO!

DON'T YOU WORRY, LITTLE ONES! WE'LL DELIVER IT FOR YOU!

OH, THANK YOU, LADY! YOU ARE VERY NICE! BUT DO YOU THINK WE COULD MAYBE GO IN WITH YOU FOR JUST A MINUTE AND LOOK AT ALL THE PURTY PICTURES? PLEASE, HUH?

6

OF COURSE YOU CAN COME IN! THIS EXHIBIT IS OPEN TO EVERYONE!
LATER, THE JUDGES VIEW ALL ENTRIES
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! THE JUDGES' UNANIMOUS DECISION IS TO GIVE FIRST PRIZE TO A MAGNIFICENT PAINTING WHICH IS AS BEAUTIFUL AS ANY DONE BY THE OLD MASTERS! MISS HEDY WOLFE IS THE TALENTED ARTIST!
HA! WHAT DID I TELL YOU? WAIT'LL BUZZ HEARS ABOUT THIS! WHEE!
OHHH!
GOLLY, NANCY, I DON'T MIND LOSING, BUT I DO MIND HEDY'S WINNING! SHE'LL REALLY RUB IT IN!
WELL, I'VE GOT TO ADMIT THAT HER PAINTING IS BEAUTIFUL! IT LOOKS AS GOOD AS ANY REMBRANDT!
ATTENTION, PLEASE! THERE'S BEEN A GREAT MISTAKE! OUR ART EXPERT HAS JUST INFORMED US THAT MISS WOLFE'S PAINTING IS A FRAUD! SHE IS THEREFORE DISQUALIFIED!

THE PAINTING MISS WOLFE CLAIMS AS HERS SHOWED UNDER THE X-RAY THAT BENEATH HER NAME IS THE NAME OF *CYRUS* WOLFE! AND BENEATH *THAT* NAME IS THE NAME OF *REMBRANDT,* WHO IS THE ORIGINAL ARTIST! THEREFORE, IT IS A CLEAR CASE OF *PLAGIARISM* AND *FRAUD!*

OUCH!

SERVES HER RIGHT!

GOSH! NOW I HAVE *ANOTHER* CHANCE TO WIN!

OUR NEXT CHOICE IS THE ARTIST WHO PAINTED NUMBER 24! THIS IS ONE OF THE FINEST PAINTINGS WE'VE SEEN IN A LONG TIME! IT SHOWS A GREAT DEAL OF CREATIVE *IMAGINATION* AND *TALENT!* WILL THE ARTIST PLEASE STEP FORWARD?

OH, NANCY! THAT'S NOT MINE EITHER! I WASN'T EVEN SECOND! I FEEL TERRIBLE! I DON'T KNOW IF I'LL *EVER* GET OVER THIS! (SOB!)

PATSY, LOOK!

YOU MEAN *YOU* PAINTED THIS MASTERPIECE?

NO, SIR! MY LITTLE SISTER PAINTED IT, AN' SHE WANTED ME TO ASK YOU IF IT WOULD BE ALL RIGHT IF INSTEAD OF *HER* GOIN' TO CAMP FOR *TWO* WEEKS, COULD *BOTH* OF US GO FOR *ONE* WEEK?

8

GOLLY, NANCY! I'VE NEVER BEEN SO HAPPY ABOUT *NOT* WINNING A CONTEST!

YES! AND IT WAS NICE OF THE JUDGES TO LET THEM BOTH GO FOR *TWO WEEKS!* AND JUST THINK! HEDY CALLED THEM *LOW CLASS!* WHY, WITH ALL HER MONEY, SHE'LL NEVER REACH THE HIGH LEVEL THEY'RE ON WHEN IT COMES TO *IMPORTANT* THINGS LIKE *CHARACTER* AND *HONESTY!*

MYSTERY OF THE SCRAPING BRICKS

WHEN BRICKS MAKE NOISES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, A GIRL NATURALLY GETS SUSPICIOUS! AND WHEN A HANDSOME BOY'S INVOLVED—ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN!

By WANDA MOORE

"YOUR folks were wonderful to let us come on ahead and get the cottage ready," Ann exclaimed to Heather as she stretched lazily in the dim light from the fireplace. "It's beautiful here! I just wish you'd come back from your cross-country trip earlier. Now there are only a couple of weeks before school opens."

Heather lay full length on the floor. "I know," she said. "I love our summer cottage, too. So peaceful. And wait till you meet Dave—he's never dated me, but maybe . . ." Suddenly she sat up. "What was that noise?"

"Just the log shifting," Ann said

Heather shook her head. "Listen," she whispered.

There was no sound but the crackling of the fire. "You and your imagination . . ." Ann smiled, but her voice trailed off and her brown eyes widened.

Both girls heard it now—a scraping sound somewhere against the bricks of the chimney. Heather's big hazel eyes met Ann's. They leaned close to the fireplace, but they could see nothing.

"Where's it coming from?" Heather gasped.

The scraping continued. Scrape. Scrape. Scrape. Almost [illegible] to her feet. "Outside," she whispered. Ann was beside her at the door. They tried to ease it open silently, but the hinges objected loudly. Heather jerked the door open, and the two girls ran along the porch that extended the entire length of the house. Together they swung around by the chimney. There was no one there so they circled the whole house. Nothing moved. There wasn't even a breeze to stir the bushes and trees.

When they were inside again, they crossed swiftly to the fireplace and listened intently. Finally they looked at each other and shook their heads helplessly. The scraping had stopped

But Heather took a flashlight from the writing desk in one corner of the room and motioned Ann to follow. When they turned the corner of the house, Heather focused the light on the base of the chimney.

"Look!" she exclaimed. "The earth's been dug

"Stop! Stop!" Heather shouted but her only answer was the rustling of bushes and snapping of twigs farther and farther away.

up there." The girls knelt and stared at it. Then Heather swung back on her heels and began to laugh.

"What's so funny?" asked Ann with a note of annoyance in her voice.

"Look," Heather said again. She put her hand into the dirt. It had been dug only about three inches deep. She laughed. "We just heard some animal digging."

"But what kind of an animal? And why should it dig there?" Ann objected.

Heather stood up. "Oh, there are lots of animals around these woods," she said confidently.

They'd just stepped back onto the porch when Ann cried, "Look!" She pointed at a clump of bushes a few yards from the porch. The shrubs were swaying, as if something or someone had just crawled through them.

"A raccoon probably," Heather said.

"*You* call it a raccoon," said Ann, nervously. "*I'm* locking the door." She shut the door behind them, pushing the bolt into place. When they were in bed, however, both girls found that they were wide-awake, listening, although quiet surrounded the cottage.

"The fire screen. I forgot it," Heather whispered suddenly. She jumped out of bed and was setting the screen in place when once more she heard—scrape, silence, scrape, silence. She ran back to the bedroom. "It's there again," she whispered to Ann. "If we ease the bolt back, pull the door open fast and run, maybe we can catch it."

Silently they got into their robes and slippers.

"Look!" she exclaimed. "The earth's been dug up there!"

The bolt slid back without a sound, and in one jerk they had the door open. They heard something fall near the chimney, but just as they reached the end of the porch a man in a long overcoat with a hat pulled low over his eyes sprinted off into the brush.

"Stop! Stop!" Heather shouted, but her only answer was the rustling of bushes and snapping of twigs farther and farther away.

"Stop, she says!" said Ann disgustedly. "What would you have done if he *had* stopped?"

Heather's laugh shook a little. "Been scared silly, silly! He's gone though. Let's find out what fell."

Ann clutched Heather's arm. "What if it's a body?" she stammered.

Heather patted Ann's hand. "Don't worry. Things like that just don't happen around here."

She stepped around the corner of the house before Ann could stop her—and then gasped. She and Ann were staring at a shovel lying in a hole by the [illegible]

[illegible]!" Heather exclaimed. "Scavenger hunt, no doubt, and we get the shovel!" She picked it up and carried it to the house, then snatched up the flashlight.

"Don't go out again!" Ann cried. "What if he comes back?"

"He was a long way off when we last heard him," Heather said. "I think he really got scared this time, and I just want to look into that hole. You put on the lights and stand on the porch. Use the telephone if there's any trouble."

Heather ran to the hole and flashed the light into it. Nothing. She bent down and felt around the inside, but the dirt was hard. Then she ran her hand along the bricks of the chimney. They were all [illegible]

[illegible] she said, when they were back in the house with the door securely bolted. "There's just nothing there."

"But what was he doing then?" Worry crept into Ann's eyes and voice.

"Oh, probably just a ghost," Heather said. Ann paled, and Heather put an arm around her. "I'm sorry, Ann. I shouldn't have said that. Ghosts don't carry shovels though."

"No." Ann's voice lacked assurance

Heather put wood on the fire. "No use trying to go to bed now. We'll keep the lights blazing. I don't think he'll come back."

"I hope you're right," Ann said weakly.

Heather began talking fast to divert Ann's thoughts. "The reason I made that silly joke about a ghost was that Joe Bates, who built this fireplace, died just a few weeks ago—the storekeeper in the village told me when we stopped by yesterday. He built most of the fireplaces and half the chimneys for miles around here, and he always did such a beautiful job. He set these tiles in." She pointed to a group of four tiles that were on each side of the fireplace. There was a pale blue animal on each one. "They were handmade in Italy. And look at this lovely mosaic effect he got on the hearth." They examined it together.

. . . By seven o'clock the next morning their cars

"THIS is what I mean!" she cried, swinging the shovel in front of her. "Now get out!"

ached from listening for noises. "I'm going to get dressed and get us some breakfast," Heather said. Ann followed her into the bedroom, and they dressed quickly.

Just as Heather put her hand on the kitchen doorknob, there was a knock at the front door.

"Oh!" Ann gasped.

Heather smiled at her. "Take it easy. People get up early around here." She opened the door.

A tall, blond boy of about eighteen stood smiling at them. "Hi, Heather!" he greeted.

"Hi! Come on in." Heather invited. "Ann, this is Dave, Joe Bates' nephew. Dave, Ann Jordan. How was the summer here?"

"Oh, okay, I guess. But the Winlights were missed." Heather dropped her lashes in embarrassment. But Dave continued, "I know this is a terrible time to come calling, but I just had to see you. And when I saw lights here last night, I figured your family must've decided to come for the end of the season."

"Yes, we took a trip this summer," Heather explained, "but we wanted to be here for a little while at least so Ann and I came ahead to sort of get things ready." She saw a worried expression flit across Dave's face. "Is something wrong?" she asked quickly.

"Yes," he answered, pulling a slip of paper from his pocket. "You probably know that my uncle died recently." The girls nodded, and Dave went on, "Well, he had a weird sense of humor, I guess. Tell me what you make of this." He held the paper toward Heather.

Slowly, she read aloud, "'The winning chimney holds more light.'" She read it again, then raised puzzled eyes to Dave. "But what does it mean?"

"I'll make it short," he replied. "As you know, my uncle was a bachelor. He said that if I finished high school with good marks, he'd put me through college, and I did. Now in his will he left me this," he slapped the paper, "and said it was the key to the money. All I had to do was find it within three weeks of his death. Ten o'clock tonight is three weeks. Otherwise it'll be used to endow a home for stray monkeys."

"*Stray monkeys!*" Ann and Heather gasped together. Dave nodded grimly.

"But what can *I* do to help?" asked Heather.

Dave regarded her seriously. "It's taken me all this time to figure it out. You know that Uncle Joe built most of the chimneys around here. Well, I suspected he must have put the money in some chimney, but it wasn't until I thought of your name, Winlight, that I realized where it must be."

Heather shook her head. "I still don't see."

"Look at it again," said Dave, holding the paper in front of her. "Leave out 'ning' in 'winning' and put 'light' in its place."

"The Winlight chimney holds more." Heather read. "Oh," she gasped, and her eyes flashed sudden anger. "So *you're* the one who was digging around the chimney last night!"

Confused, Dave stepped back. "What do you mean?"

Heather ran to the shovel that she'd left beside the front door. "*This* is what I mean!" she cried, swinging the shovel in front of her. "Now get out!"

"Wait!" Dave shouted, but she had him backed against the door before he was able to ask. "Do you mean that someone was actually *digging* out there last night?" He waved one arm wildly.

The blade of the shovel hit the floor with a bang. "Wasn't it you?" Heather asked in a flat voice.

"No, it wasn't!" he shouted back at her.

Color rose on Heather's face. "Oh, this is awful!" she exclaimed.

"Awful is right," Dave agreed. "Here someone has it all figured out already!" He stopped and looked from Heather to Ann. "And whoever it was must be trying to steal it!"

"Where could it be?" wailed Heather. "Yes, where?" Ann echoed faintly.

"Somewhere in that fireplace," said Dave, striding toward it.

"But we can't tear the whole fireplace apart," Heather objected.

Silently Dave studied the fireplace. Then he said, "No, we shouldn't have to. I'm sure Uncle Joe would

The other end of the board flew up, the shovel went down, and the man fell flat on his back.

have rigged some way we could get it out without marring his own handiwork. Do you know of any trick gadgets on it?"

"There aren't any," said Heather.

"There have to be," Dave declared.

"Well, there's a trick board here that Dad's going to have to fix," Heather offered, trying to ease Dave's worried look. With her toe she pressed a board by the fireplace, and the other end rose up halfway across the room beside a hassock. "Clever, isn't it?" she said, as she walked to the jutting end of the board and shoved it back down with the shovel. She left the shovel there, leaning against the hassock. Dave smiled at her as she turned back to the fireplace, and she felt better. "We'll all try," she said. "You take the mosaic, Dave, and Ann and I will each take a side."

"And don't miss a spot," cautioned Dave.

"No, sir," said Heather. They worked in silence for a while.

Finally, Heather asked, "Dave, do you think it could be on the outside like the prowler thought last night?"

Dave leaned back on his heels and looked grim. "Not a very safe place," he said, "but if everything else fails, we'll try it." With the poker he started to jab the bricks inside the fireplace.

Heather turned back to her section. "Did you notice the Italian tiles, Dave?" she asked. "Italians!" she cried abruptly. "They had secret panels in their big houses, didn't they?" Frantically she began to feel around the tile, over its smooth surface, above and below it. One finger slipped into a hollow in the rough brick just above a unicorn's horn, and the four tiles swung out. She gasped, and Ann and Dave peered over her shoulder as she pulled a box out of a brick-lined compartment. She handed it to Dave.

His face was pale as he opened it and found piles of paper money stacked inside!

"Hands up! Don't move or I'll shoot!"

Three heads jerked up to face the kitchen door. The man they'd seen the night before in the same coat and hat, with a white handkerchief covering the rest of his face, was standing in the doorway with a gun pointed at them. "I want that box," he barked in a gruff voice. "You did a good job of hunting." His laugh was cold. "I followed you here," he added to Dave.

"You can't have it. It's Dave's," Heather cried.

"This says I can," the man said, leveling the gun at her.

"He wins," Dave said bitterly. "Don't move, girls."

The man came toward them, but stopped a short distance away and held out his hand. "Give it to me," he growled at Dave. Slowly, Dave handed him the box. Placing one foot behind the other, the thief began backing toward the kitchen door. They stood tensely, watching him. Then Heather shifted her foot. The man backed one more step, and Heather quickly pressed down with her toe. The other end of the board flew up, the shovel went down, and the man fell flat on his back. As the gun left his hand, it went off at the ceiling, and the box and the money scattered around him.

In one leap Dave covered the intervening space. His fist hit a hard blow to the man's chin, and the thief's body went limp. Dave tore off the handkerchief.

"Who is he?" Heather could hardly raise her voice above a hoarse whisper.

"I don't know," said Dave. "Face looks familiar though. Get a rope. We'll call the sheriff."

"You call the sheriff, Ann. Just ring the operator," Heather instructed. "I'll find a rope."

She located the clothesline, and Dave tied the man up. He was just coming to when the sheriff arrived.

"What's going on here?" the sheriff asked, looking from the helpless man to the money scattered on the floor and back to the man. Quickly, Dave explained.

When he finished, the sheriff shook his head sadly. "What money will do to people!" he exclaimed. "This is Ned Jones," he motioned toward the prostrate man, "the hermit who lived by himself way off from nowhere. He hears about Bates' crazy will and suddenly wants money when he'd never before wanted any all his life—at least, not enough to work for it." He jerked the man to his feet. "Have fun picking up your toys, children," he smiled, indicating the money with his head, as he shoved the man out the door.

"We will," they shouted after him.

. . . "You know," Dave said to Heather as the three of them finally sat down to breakfast, "if it hadn't been for you, I might not be getting to college this fall. Think I could begin repaying you by inviting you up to the first prom?"

"You could try," Heather replied, answering the twinkle in his eyes with one of her own. THE END

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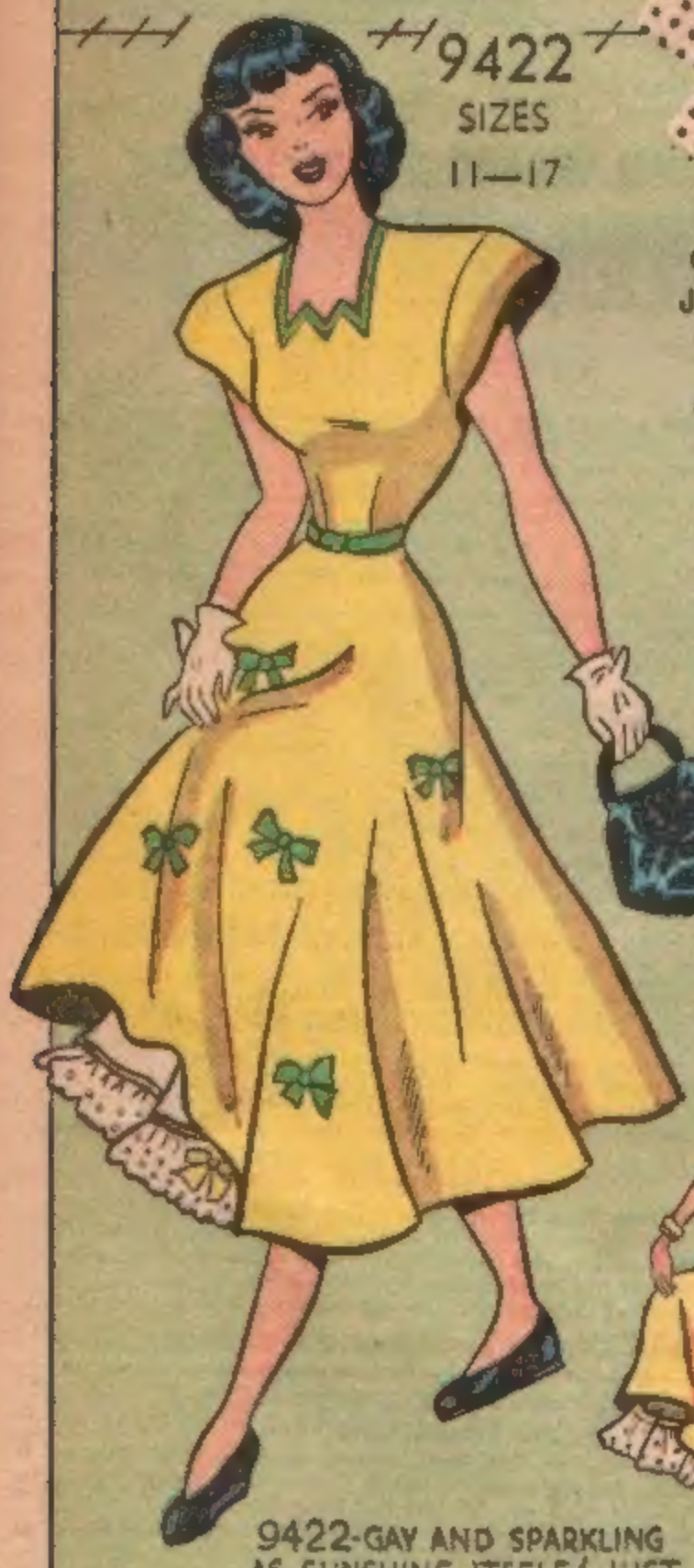

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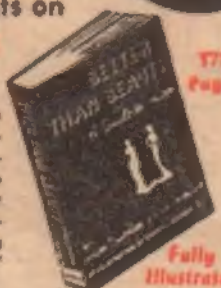

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